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EDITED BY EARLE WILLIAMS NEWTON

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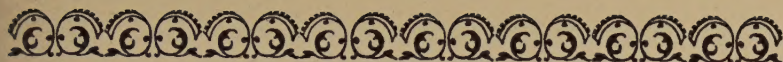
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# Young Town of Burke, Vermont

ITS SETTLERS IN THE FIRST AND SECOND  
UNITED STATES CENSUS 1790 AND 1800

By DOROTHY C. WALTER

SETTLEMENT of the Town of Burke, Vermont, in 1792, and its organization in 1796, fell between the taking of the first and second censuses of the United States in 1790 and 1800, though the town had been granted to its original proprietors—65 inhabitants of Litchfield County, Connecticut—in 1782, and had been surveyed and divided into rights in 1787.

The census enumerations of 1790 and 1800 are, therefore, of especial interest in this, the town's sesquicentennial, year of 1946, and all the more so because they were not available for study when the Burke Historical Society was formed in anticipation of the town's centennial in 1896. It was not until 1907 that the United States Department of Commerce and Labor began to publish the detailed material from the Census of 1790; some of the enumerators' sheets had been lost forever when the British burned the Capitol during the War of 1812, though fortunately the Vermont records were not among those destroyed. The Census of 1800 had never been published at all, though the original sheets as sent in by the enumerators were stored in Washington. Some years ago, at the request of Mortimer R. Proctor, later Governor, permission was obtained from the Federal authorities to make photostatic copies of the Vermont returns of 1800. These copies, in the possession of the Vermont Historical Society, were typed and studied in 1929 under the lead of Dorman B. E. Kent and his son, Richard E. Kent. Later, permission was secured from Washington to publish the lists, the Vermont Historical Society had an index made, and the material was published in book form by the Society in 1938, under the title *Heads of Families at the Second Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1800: Vermont*.



## NATION AND STATE AT THE FIRST CENSUS

The first United States census under the newly adopted Constitution was ordered in March, 1790, to begin the first Monday in August, and to be completed in nine months. The time was stretched, however, to include two states not mentioned in the act setting up the census: Rhode Island, which demanded a Bill of Rights in the Constitution and so hung off about joining the Federal Union until May, 1790, and Vermont, the independent republic, which was not admitted until March 4, 1791.

The United States at that time took in only the area east of the Mississippi and north of "the Floridas": all the rest of our country of today was owned by Spain. States enumerated were Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia (then including wild land in Alabama and much of Mississippi), Maryland, Massachusetts (then including Maine), New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina (just ceasing to own Tennessee), Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, and Virginia (then including Kentucky). No enumeration was made in the sparsely inhabited Northwest Territory, set up in 1787. The population of the United States in the states and districts that were enumerated was only 3,893,635, roughly half as many as live now in the corporate limits of New York City alone. Philadelphia was the capital of the country and its second largest city, its population of 28,522 being a little larger than that of the present city of Burlington, Vermont. New York, even then the largest city, had 33,131 people, and Boston, the third in size, 18,220.

Vermont in 1790 had a total population of 84,425, most of whom had come in the thirty-one years since Robert Rogers and his Rangers had rendered the Green Mountain region safe for settlement by exterminating the St. Francis Indians (1759). Many had been attracted to the independent republic of Vermont (1777-1791) because it was not saddled with Revolutionary War debts and depreciated currency, like the original states that had joined under the Articles of Confederation. There was hope in Vermont for men made poor by the war. They could work and get ahead.

The state at the first census was divided into only seven counties: Addison, Bennington, Chittenden, Orange, Rutland, Windham, and Windsor. Burke and the rest of the present area of Caledonia County were included in Orange County, along with many towns now appearing in Essex, Lamoille, Orleans, and Washington counties, as well as those within the present limits of Orange County.

Vermont was well mapped and laid out into townships, though the boundaries of some were not as they are today, and many bore names now unfamiliar. Who in 1946 can locate offhand the towns of Billymead, Caldersburgh, Carthage, Duncansborough, Hopkinsville, Kellyvale, Kingston, Littleton, Lutterloch, Minden, Minehead, Navy, Random, St. Andrews, Salem, and Wildersburg, all of which are shown in the northeastern section of the state on a map made in 1794 by James Whitelaw, Surveyor-General?

Burke was listed as a township in the census of 1790, but was labeled "not inhabited," and its next neighbor, Billymead (now named Sutton), was designated in the same way. But neighboring towns were filling up, as the following sampling from the tabulations will show.

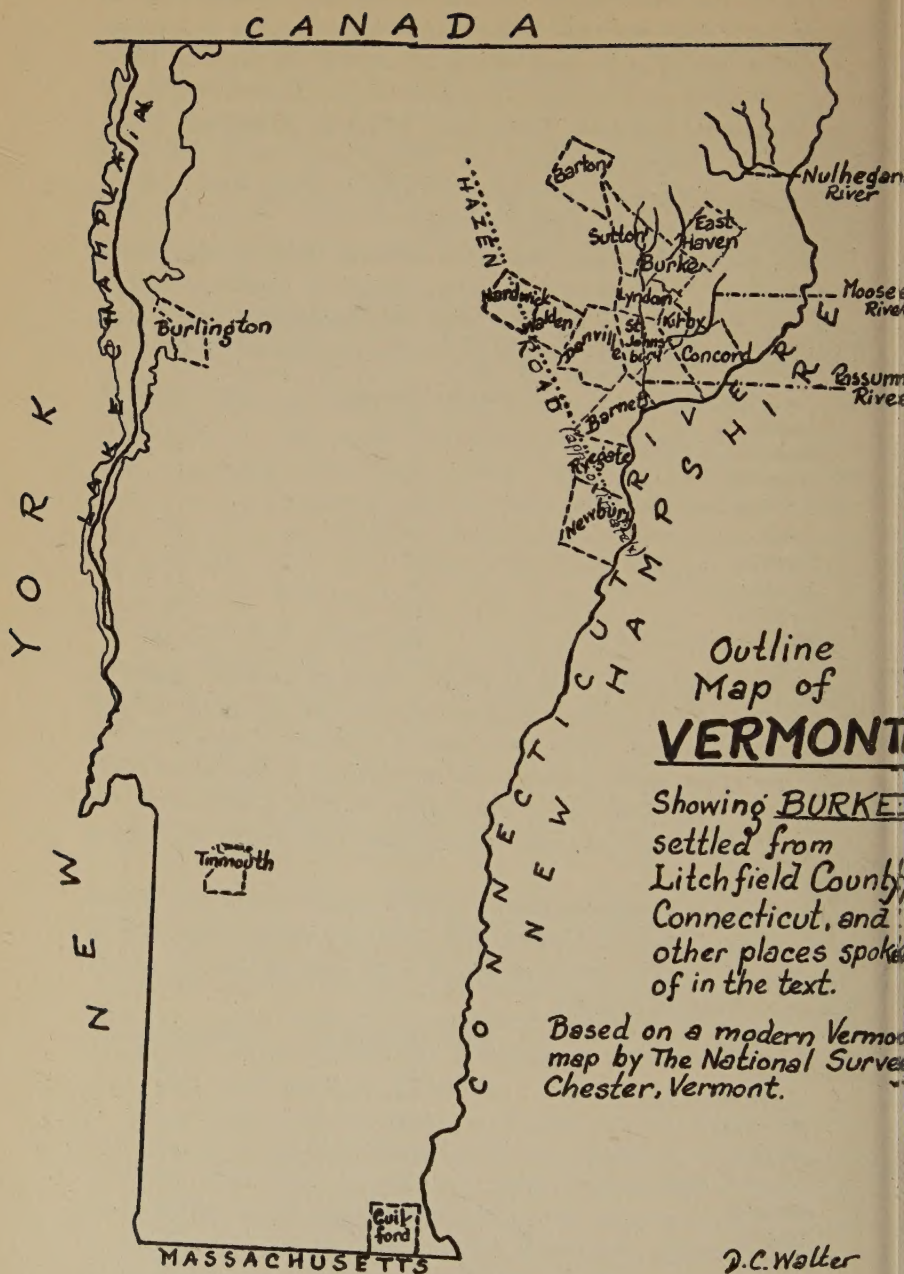
1790	<i>Heads of Families</i>	<i>Total Inhabitants</i>
Barnet	98	477
Barton (not inhabited)	..	..
Billymead (not inhabited)	..	..
BURKE (not inhabited)	..	..
Concord	12	49
Danville	101	574
Lyndon	12	59
Ryegate	36	187
St. Johnsbury	34	143

It is true that some of the so-called "heads of families" appear to have been lords of themselves alone, as only one individual is listed opposite their names. They were pioneers, getting a toehold in the wilderness before sending back to the more populous regions for families already established or for sweethearts waiting downcountry for the summons to come to make new families in the young settlements in the north.

By 1800 the population-picture in these sample towns had altered considerably. Caledonia County, still containing many towns now in Washington County, had been set off from Orange County, as had Essex and Orleans counties.

1800	<i>Heads of Families</i>	<i>Total Population</i>
Barnet	150	858
Barton (Orleans Co.)	28	128
Billymead	26	144
BURKE	22	108
Concord (Essex Co.)	52	322
Danville	232	1514
Lyndon	94	542
Ryegate	69	415
St. Johnsbury	99	651





# Outline Map of VERMONT

Showing BURKE settled from Litchfield County, Connecticut, and other places spoken of in the text.

Based on a modern Vermont map by The National Survey Chester, Vermont.

D.C. Walter



Early censuses do not give the variety of information that is customary in the enumerations of the present time. It was 1850 before a separate line was accorded each person. But the enumerators of 1800 collected somewhat more detail than did those of the first census ten years earlier, as comparison of the categories employed will show:

*1790 First U.S. Census*

Name of Head of Family

Number of:

Free White Males 16 years and upward, including heads of families

Free White Males under 16

Free White Females, including heads of families

All other Free Persons

Slaves

*1800 Second U.S. Census*

Name of Head of Family

Number of:

Free White Males

Under 10 years of age

Of 10 and under 16

Of 16 and under 26, including heads of families

Of 26 and under 45, including heads of families

Of 45 and upwards, including heads of families

Free White Females

Under 10 years of age

Of 10 and under 16

Of 16 and under 26, including heads of families

Of 26 and under 45, including heads of families

Of 45 and upwards, including heads of families

All other Free Persons except Indians not taxed

Slaves

The line relating to the number of slaves is omitted in the reprint of the 1800 Vermont enumeration, as there were no slaves in the state.

BURKE'S POPULATION IN 1800

The returns from Burke in 1800 show 17 surnames: Barber, Boynton, Brokway, Coe, Hall, Hicks, Humphrey, Leach, McMullin, Moses, Nichols, Spencer, Thurber, Walter, Warren, Wilder, and Woodruff. There were 22 families. The population was quite evenly divided between the plough and the distaff, as there were 55 males and 53 females. It was also quite evenly divided between children and adults, with 50 persons under sixteen and 58 who were sixteen or upwards. But the group under sixteen was rather heavily weighted with younger children, as there were 22 boys and 21 girls under ten, but only 3 boys and 4 girls between ten and sixteen.

Why there was this dearth of younger "teen-agers" is anyone's guess. Perhaps the few entries in this column reflect the loss of young men in the Revolution (1775-1783) who would have been the fathers of children in this age-group. Perhaps the separation of families, not only in the war years, but during the relocation in Vermont, had something to do with it. The Continental Army was not formally disbanded until November 3, 1783, at New York City, and it was full of men from Connecticut. Or maybe the sparse numbers between ten and sixteen years bear witness to the toll taken by epidemics and by childhood diseases and accidents under the severe conditions of life during and after the war and in the pioneering enterprise. But chiefly it may be explained by the youth of the adult group as a whole: 45 under forty-five, as compared with 13 forty-five years of age and over. The head of families in Burke in 1800 were mostly young fellows, not long married, and so there were more little children than teen-agers in the settlers' cabins.

The complete returns for Burke in the census of 1800 are given in the following tabulation. (See next page and summary below.)

Summary: Males in families .....	55
Females in families .....	53
All other free persons except Indians not taxed .....	0
No slaves	—
	108
50 children (under 16)	
58 adults (over 16)	
22 families	

BURKE, VERMONT, August, 1800.

By themselves these few names and figures constitute a meager record indeed. But they furnish a good foundation on which to begin a town history, building it up from family and neighborhood tradition and nailing it together with the scraps of dated information that the ancestors have left us in state, county, town, court, church, and military records, deeds and other business papers, letters, samplers, certificates, wills, probate entries, and the lists of births, baptisms, marriages, and deaths they set down in their family Bibles. There are also gravestone inscriptions and contemporary newspaper items, and for some of the early inhabitants there is mention brief or lengthy in Hemenway's *Vermont Historical Gazetteer* and in the Burke Centennial Edition of the *St. Johnsbury Republican* of July 1, 1896, both of which were compiled from data of the sort mentioned above, or from interviews with early residents of Burke or their descendants.



Names of Heads of Families	Free White Males			Free White Females			All other free persons ex- cept Indians not taxed
	Under 10 yrs.	Of 10 & under 16	Of 16 & under 26	Of 10 & under 16	Of 16 & under 26	Of 45 & under 45	
Including heads of families							
Barber, William	1	..	..	1	..	1	..
Boynton, Ammi	..	..	1	..	..	1	..
Brokway, John	2	..	1	..	2	1	..
Coe, Abner	1	1	1	..	1	1	..
Hall, Daniel	1	1	..	1	2	1	..
Hicks, Peleg	..	..	1	1	..	1	..
Humphrey, Abel	..	..	..	..	2	1	..
Leach, John	1	..	1	..	2	1	..
McMullin, Ephraim	..	..	1	..	2	1	..
Mosses, Reuben	2	1	1	..	..	1	..
Nichols, Joshua	1	..	1	..	2	1	..
Spencer, Ranney	2	..	1	..	1	1	..
Thurber, Barnabas	3	..	1	..	..	1	..
Walter, Daniel	2	..	2	1	1	1	..
Walter, John	2	..	3	1	1	1	..
Walter, Jonathan	1	..	1	..	..	1	..
Walter, Lemuel	..	..	..	1	..	1	..
Walter, Norris	..	..	1	1	..	2	..
Warren, Joshua	1	..	1	..	1	..	..
Wilder, Zebina	2	..	1	..	2	1	..
Woodruff, John	..	..	1	..	..	1	..
Woodruff, William	..	..	1	1	3	1	..
55 males in 22 families	22	3	10	13	21	9	0
53 females in 22 families							6

## SOME DETAILS ABOUT THE HEADS OF FAMILIES IN BURKE

Who were these Burke settlers, and what had been their life in the background they chose to leave for new homes in the northern wilderness?

*Daniel Hall* is a good one to begin with. He was not the first settler in Burke: that was Lemuel Walter; but he was doubtless well acquainted with the region in general long before the Connecticut man came into the town. In March, 1770, he and his brothers Jacob and Elijah Hall settled in Barnet at the foot of Stevens Falls. Theirs was said to be the first house in Barnet and also in what is now Caledonia County. Elijah's daughter was the first child born in the settlement, and Daniel's wife, formerly a Mrs. Wright, the first to die there. The brothers seem to have explored widely in northeastern Vermont along the Connecticut, the Passumpsic, the Moose, the Nulhegan, and other rivers, both before and after the Revolution. Jacob and Daniel were militia officers in 1779 and also in 1781, and charged with guarding the frontier. Oral tradition in Burke, a tale told by Daniel in his old age to some of the Coes and handed down by them to present-day residents, credits him with having been sent by the "Governor-General of Vermont," Thomas Chittenden, on a diplomatic mission to some Indian chief because he knew the Indians and their ways, a commission that he apparently carried out with shrewdness and good sense. He must have married again before 1793. In 1792 he settled in the new town of St. Johnsbury, and the next year in Lyndon. This is the story of his removal as given in Hemenway.

*Hall had grant of land from Dr. Arnold—hundred acres—in St. Johnsbury—west of Passumpsic—above Plain—by mistake, deed not given—next year Doctor dies—alarming apprehensions—Hall applies to Josias Lyndon—son of Doctor—J. L. gives him hundred acres—up in Lyndon—Hall satisfied—next morning up early—packs wife and goods on hand sled—travels to Lyndon—on crust—unpacks wife and goods—builds fire—sets up wigwam—moves in wife and goods—all settled—sundown—. Next morning, nothing to eat—takes gun—sallies into forest—tracks a moose—big one—shoots moose—skins thigh—cuts*



*out steak—carries home—wife delighted—heard gun go off—thought breakfast coming—roasts meat on forked stick—eats—no butter, pepper, salt—after breakfast calls up all neighbors—they skin moose—each takes a piece—. Hall gets out hand sled—loads on moose meat and pelt—goes to St. Johnsbury—trades—gets three pecks potatoes, half bushel meal, peck salt—carries home to wife—wife delighted—sundown.*

One likes to think that the staccato style of this narrative brings us the flavor of Daniel Hall's own mode of speech, though it may be only the manner of the one who retold the story for the compiler of the *Gazetteer*, or the mode of note-taking of the one who wrote it down.

A 12-year-old daughter of Daniel Hall died in Lyndon in 1794 of canker-rash. By 1800, listed as more than 45 years old, he had moved on to Burke where he was living among the pioneers with five other persons in his family: a boy and two girls under 10, a boy between 10 and 16, and a wife between 26 and 45. In 1819 an entry in the Burke town records shows that hard luck had caught up with Daniel Hall: "Voted that the selectmen pay \$10.25 for Daniel Hall's cow and save her to the family at Discretion." But he and Sally, his wife, were self-respecting, if poor, and cleaned the meeting-house yearly to pay their pew-rent. He died in 1829 at 78 years, and is buried, with his wife, in Burke Green Cemetery, a soldier of the Revolution and a pioneer settler in four Vermont towns.

*John Leach*, called Jonathan in Hemenway, was a settler from Bridgewater, Massachusetts, who had a disconcerting experience getting started in Burke. His first "pitch" was in the center of the town, where he purchased land and began improvements. But while he was away moving his family from the Bay State to their new home, the proprietors of Burke, Connecticut people only one of whom (Ozias Humphrey) ever came to settle in the town, obtained a new draught of their holdings. This brought Mr. Leach's number in a different place, some five miles south of the spot where he had begun clearing land, into the region called "Burke Tongue," then unbroken wilderness, which was later added to the town of Kirby. With a neighbor as a guide (was it Daniel Hall?), Mr. Leach set off to hunt this new location, finding it with difficulty. In April, 1800, he began to make a log house, a hard task as he had no shingles or boards, to say nothing of

many other building materials and tools usually deemed indispensable. It was only a rude structure with the gable-ends still open when his wife and two small children moved in. He then turned to clearing away the forest and managed to raise enough grain that first season to supply his family. By another year, without a team, he subdued enough of the wilderness to harvest 150 bushels of wheat. By the third year he put up a framed barn, which was used for a time for school and for religious meetings, as well as for storing crops and sheltering farm animals. Later he built a sawmill. He and his wife both lived to a great age, and were well and alert in their late eighties when interviewed by the author of the section on Kirby in the *Gazetteer*.

*Barnabas Thurber* was one of the earliest comers in Burke, and settled on the central ridge of the town between the clearing of Lemuel Walter, the first to come in 1792, and Burke Green. He was one of the voters present at the organization of the town at the cabin of Lemuel Walter in December, 1796, and was chosen first selectman. At the first regular town meeting the next March, he was chosen moderator and surveyor of highways and reelected first selectman. In 1798 he was on a town committee with John Walter and Samuel Colefix to "treat with Elder Peleg Hicks to come and preach with us." He was the son-in-law of Elder Hicks. Did he come from Guilford, Vermont, to Burke? Elder Hicks had lived in Guilford, and Thurber was a name that occurred frequently in that town.

*Elder Peleg Hicks*, a Scot, was the first settled minister in Burke. For about eighteen years he was pastor of a Baptist church which he seems to have organized in Guilford, Vermont, but moved to Lyndon in 1796. In March, 1798, he was officially invited by a committee appointed by the town to come to Burke to preach; in April he was granted sixty acres of the minister's right, and in July sixty acres more. In 1799 disagreements arose because people in town who were not Baptists said Elder Hicks did not represent their religious views and they did not wish him to be installed as pastor to benefit by the town's grant of ministerial land. In Connecticut, from which many of the settlers had come, the Congregational church was the "Standing Order," and there were people of that faith in Burke. They, as well as those who later split off to form the Universalist and Methodist societies in Burke, opposed the naming of Elder Hicks as first settled minister as a threat to financial support for their own denominations,



as well as on doctrinal grounds. Feeling ran high. Legal advice was sought of Squire Cahoon in Lyndon. In 1801 Elder Hicks was voted to be the first settled minister and entitled to the land, and the Baptist church was organized, but as there was still ill will about it, Mr. Hicks in the interest of harmony deeded back to the town sixty acres of his grant of land.

But this did not settle the doctrinal dispute. In Connecticut it had been the custom to allow churches not agreeing with the Standing Order "soberly to dissent," and all sects, in 1791, had been granted the right of free incorporation. This accounts for an entry in the Burke town records in June, 1806: "Certificate of Religious Sentiments in Burke. We, the subscribers, do hereby certify that we do not agree in religious opinions with a majority of the inhabitants of this town," followed by the names of twelve resident men; and another entry in January, 1807, when two other men prominent in the town also filed their dissent. A Congregational society was formed in February, 1807, the Universalists began to hold separate meetings, though not organized until 1815, and the few Methodists formed a "class." Elder Hicks was installed as pastor in May, 1807, but perhaps disheartened at so many departures from his flock he requested dismissal in 1809, and was released in full fellowship by the Baptist society. He is buried at Burke Green.

When the new meeting house was built in Burke Hollow in 1825, the four denominations that had split off during his pastorate joined forces in putting up the beautiful building, but not in hiring a minister. They drew lots to see which denomination should furnish a preacher for the dedicatory exercises, the privilege falling to the Baptists. Later, in the by-laws of the Meeting House Association, they settled the order in which the use of the building should be rotated—one Sunday each a month to the Congregationalists, the Universalists, the Baptists, and the Methodists. The infrequent fifth Sunday in a month was not allowed to upset this order nor to add to the quota of any of the four sects, as a missionary society was then invited to furnish a preacher. It was also ruled that no one of a denomination different from the one occupying the house for the day should interfere during worship by directing, reading, or speaking. This separatist policy extended not only to doctrinal matters and the use of the building, but also included separate wood piles, wood boxes, and (the jokers insisted) denominational brooms and dustpans, as well. "Good fences make good neighbors."

*Ammi Boynton* must be Ammi Burrington, who soon after 1800 persuaded his father, Ebenezer, to sell out his land in New Hartford, Connecticut, and bring his large family (in all three girls and five boys) to Burke. Ammi's house was on the high central ridge of the town near those of the other earliest comers, but his father settled in what is now Burke Hollow. Asahel Burrington, for many years prominent in Burke as schoolmaster, postmaster, and town representative, and even more so because he served as town clerk for more than half a century, was the youngest of Ammi's brothers. The family is still well represented in Burke.

*Abner Coe*, Mary (Ledyard) Coe, and their five children, the youngest three years old, arrived from Winchester, Connecticut, in time to be enumerated as Burke residents when the census was taken in August, 1800. Mr. Coe did not have to clear ground to build a shelter for his family, as he bought out John Walter, who had made a clearing and built a cabin; in 1802 Mr. Coe built a new house, the one later known as the Dana Coe place when his grandson lived in it. Two more children were born to the Abner Coes in Burke: Anson in 1801, Oliver in 1808. One daughter returned to Connecticut, but the rest of the family married and made their homes near their parents, having many descendants, some of whom live in town to this day, though not on the old home place. In June, 1840, when he was 77, Mr. Coe was listed as one of Burke's three remaining Revolutionary pensioners, the others being Benjamin Farmer, 90, and Seth Clark, 80. At that time he was living with his youngest son, Oliver.

*Abel Humphrey* was the oldest son in the large family of Ozias Humphrey, the only one of the sixty-five proprietors of Burke, men and women from Litchfield County, Connecticut, to settle in the town. Abel and his family came first and cleared land on the eastern slope of the high central ridge, on the road that now runs at the lower level between East Burke and Burke Green. In 1801 his father came, settling above Abel on the height of land south of Burke Green where the sightly location looks off toward Lake Willoughby's Mount Hor and Mount Pisgah to the west, and to Burke Mountain on the east. This family, too, is well represented in the annals of the town.

*Reuben Mosses* (Moses) died in Burke in 1805. The administrator of his estate, the first to be settled in town, was Benjamin Belden, appointed December 25, 1805. Belden, surveyor and agent for the



Connecticut proprietors, came to Burke often on business connected with land sales, beginning in 1791, settling in town in November, 1805. Two persons named Moses—Esther, 76, and Martin, 79—were still being paid Revolutionary pensions in June, 1840, in Barkhamsted, Litchfield County, Connecticut, and may have been kindred of Reuben Moses of Burke.

*Zebina Wilder* was an early settler in Lyndon, where his name appears on the first grand list drawn up in the year of that town's organization in 1792. His daughter Lydia was the first girl born in Lyndon. His land was on the high central ridge that runs over the town line of Burke into Lyndon, near that of the other very early settlers in Burke, but he is more associated with the town of Lyndon, where his descendants still live, in the East Lyndon section, than with Burke. Was it a mistake about town lines that caused him to be listed as a resident of Burke in 1800?

*William Woodruff* and his wife, Ruth Porter, were from Bristol, Connecticut, where they had four children. They emigrated to Timmouth, Vermont, in 1796, to Burke Green about 1798. Four more girls were born to them in Burke. One daughter, Resia, who married Matthew Cushing, the Burke Hollow miller, used to say that the great pine tree that was long a landmark on the skyline just north of the Burke Green cemetery was planted in her father's dooryard when she was a little girl and that she used to water it with an old china teapot when it was first set out. Mrs. Woodruff was a sister of David Porter of Hartford, Connecticut, another of the land agents in charge of sales in Burke. The name Woodruff is still well known in Burke.

*John Woodruff* had come to town by 1798, when he acted as clerk pro tem at town meeting. His marriage to Esther Barbour in 1799 was the first recorded in town. She was the daughter of *William Barbour*, rendered as *Barber* on the 1800 census list.

Three of the persons listed in the 1800 census are still only names with a few figures attached as far as the writer is concerned, no further information yet appearing about *John Brokway*, *Ephraim McMullin*, and *Joshua Nichols*. However there were *Brockways* in Sutton a little later, and a George Nichols—one of those who in 1806 registered in the town records their sober dissent from the religious opinions of the majority of their fellow townsmen—lived on a lot he had cleared just north of the present East Burke cemetery. He and his

wife Betsy left in 1807 to move to "The West," in this case northern New York. Did the census enumerator, who seems to have been a little hazy anyway as to spelling, misunderstand George's name as Josh, and then dignify it into Joshua when he made out his report? Or was there really a Joshua Nichols in Burke in 1800?

In the case of *Daniel Walter*, the head of a family in Burke in 1800 who is of greatest interest to the writer because he is her great-great-great grandfather, information from several sources is available, though the personality of Daniel has faded into the past and she does not know if he was a short man or a tall one, or if he was solemn or merry. Fitting the scattered dates and facts into the bare record of the census helps not only in filling out the story of Daniel's life, but it also makes clearer the relationships of the group of heads of families as a whole, for rather a large proportion of these early settlers came from the same town, Winchester, in Litchfield County, Connecticut, or from towns very near by, in the hilly northwestern corner of the Wooden Nutmeg State, and were relatives or else had been neighbors in their former homes.

Daniel Walter's family in Burke in 1800 was made up as follows:

*One man of 45 and upwards*  
*One woman between 26 and 45*  
*Two young men between 16 and 26*  
*Two boys and one girl under 10*

Years afterward Daniel's son, Augustus Walter, wrote in his big Bible: "Augustus Walter, which was the son of Daniel, which was the son of Henry. Henry married Lydia Tuttle. His generation was Lemuel, John, Daniel, & Patience. Daniel married Molly Gleason. His generation was Augustus, Leonard, Polly, Daniel, Erastus. Augustus married Abigail W. Porter . . . 1805. . . . Augustus Walter was born in the year 1779, Mar. 4." Daniel's tombstone in Burke Green cemetery says he died Feb. 20, 1829, ae. 74, so he would have been just 45 in 1800. Augustus was his oldest son. He and Leonard were the two between 16 and 26—they would have been 21 and 19 in 1800—and the younger ones, Polly, Daniel, Jr., and Erastus, seem to fit very neatly into the record, a girl and two boys under ten years of age.

Family tradition says that Daniel Walter's oldest son, Augustus, pioneered before his father on the Walter farm in Burke that is now

known as "Hilltop," the home of Mr. and Mrs. Walter A. Nelson. Late in the 1790's, when he was a young fellow under twenty, Augustus walked to Burke from Winchester, Connecticut, bringing his pack on his back. At least in the last portion of the journey he had to find his way through wild land along a route marked only by blazed trees. Who came with him is not now known, other young fellows, no doubt, if anybody; perhaps his cousins, Norris and John Walter, Jr. At all events, he seems to have arrived before his parents, Daniel and Molly (Gleason) Walter and their younger children; he was heading for a region where several of his relatives and neighbors had preceded him, and he was soon busy clearing land with his cousin (or perhaps double cousin) Norris, son of his father's brother, John, and Sarah (Gleason) Walter.

The first settler in Burke, the boys' uncle *Lemuel Walter*, also from Winchester, had long ago learned to make himself comfortable in the wilderness; he had served with the Connecticut troops under Ethan Allen at Ticonderoga in 1775, and in Captain Alden's Company, Colonel Butler's Regiment, in 1780. In 1792 he had made a clearing and a cabin on the high ridge running north and south in Burke through the middle of the town, just above the present Mountain View Farm, and lived there entirely alone except for the beasts of the wilderness for two summers and a winter before he brought his family to town in 1794. In 1795 other settlers had come from Winchester, including Godfrey and Sally (Walter) Jones (why do they not appear on the 1800 census list?); *Ranney Spencer*, husband of John and Sarah (Gleason) Walter's oldest daughter, Cynthia, whose son Willard was the first boy born in Burke; Barnabas Thurber, mentioned previously; and William Barbour, of whom more later. By 1796 there were settlers enough so that the town was organized, with Lemuel Walter as moderator, town clerk, and third selectman, Barnabas Thurber and Godfrey Jones as first and second selectmen, and Ira Walter, Lemuel's son, as constable. By August, 1800, when the census was taken, there were five heads of families by the name of *Walter* in Burke: *Daniel*, *John*, *Jonathan* (was he John, Jr.?), *Lemuel*, and *Norris*, as well as another Walter "in-law," *Joshua Warren*, husband of Norris's and Cynthia's younger sister, Jerusha.

In March, 1799, Norris and Augustus leased a school right from the town on the present Nelson and Orcutt farms, made a clearing and a shelter, and prepared a patch of land to plant the potatoes which



they had laboriously brought up from some settlement several miles to the south—Lyndon, doubtless, which had the nearest gristmill in 1799, though it might have been from St. Johnsbury, or even further away in Barnet or Newbury. After their crop was in the ground, they ran out of food, and for a short time managed to stave off starvation by grubbing up and eating some of the seed-potatoes. But soon their luck turned. They shot a deer, and from then on fared better, and the rest of the potato patch grew in peace. Augustus made potato whiskey for years—family tradition says that was what paid for the farm. But to the end of his days he never forgot his early experience. Often in later years, when he and his son Porter were asked for help by some needy neighbor, the older man was open-handed, even perhaps to the undeserving, in a way his son could never understand; for Porter had grown up in the abundance of a productive farm and had never looked starvation straight in the eye as his father had done.

In 1813, during the second war with England, Augustus's brother-in-law, David Porter, of Hartford, Connecticut, wrote him under date of September 23:

*If the war continues, your potatoe Whiskey will bring the Money, therefore don't sell it without the pay down and begin as Early as you can get a good man, for the Still will be taxed after the first day of Jan<sup>y</sup>, 18 for 1 Month, 32 for 2 Months, 42 for 3 Months on the Gallon of what the Still will hold so that it will cost you about \$21 for the liberty to run your Still three months as potatoe stills go at half price it will be best to take out license for as much time as you expect to keep going at once, for they tax less for a long time in proportion than for a short time. If the war lasts till next spring Maple Sugar will bring 1/ if not 20<sup>ct</sup> a lb, therefore look out and make the best of your time.*

When the Washingtonian temperance movement began to stir up sentiment against liquor, Augustus was at first offended at being asked to sign the pledge, though he was a pillar of the Methodist church by then, but before long he gave up the still. But this was many years after the pioneering days.

Sometime before August, 1800, Daniel Walter and his wife Mary or Molly, as she was more usually called, and the younger children joined their oldest son on the farm. No account of their journey remains, but what travel was like at that time and how such an experience appeared to at least one homesick migrant to Vermont from the

same part of Connecticut may be gathered from the account (Hemenway: Vol. I, p. 330) of how Elder Amos Tuttle moved his family from the town of Litchfield, Connecticut, where he had been settled over a church, to Hardwick, Vermont, in the fall of 1795.

Starting in mid October, the Tuttles were fifteen days on the way; but meeting with no more serious accident than the breaking of the wagon, they arrived at Gilman's small bark-covered log cabin in Walden during the night of October 31, in a hard rainstorm. Spreading beds from their wagon on the cabin floor, they lay down to rest. As the cabin had no windows, daylight did not appear until they opened the door, when they found that in the night the weather had changed and the ground was covered with fifteen inches of snow. A messenger sent on ahead brought help from their new parishioners in Hardwick. Three sleds drawn by wild steers were sent to bring them on their way, two for the goods, and one, well filled with straw and fitted with boxes for seats, for the sick, disheartened, and weeping mother and children. They started off again along the Hazen Road, up hill and down dale, pausing at the Lamoille River for a bridge to be repaired.

"Dear husband, where are you taking me?" exclaimed Mrs. Tuttle, as the steers turned off the road to follow a narrow path through the woods. "I shall die, and what will become of the children?"

Her sense of desolation must have increased as the steers, as sure-footed and speedy up hill and down hill as on the level, plunged through a brook and zigzagged alarmingly down steep banks through the burnt slash till they drew up at the cabin of a neighbor. There the Tuttles found they would have to put up until they could make habitable the out-of-repair, empty shanty that awaited them as a home, and could have their food supplies recruited by a pioneer donation party in the form of a neighborhood moose hunt.

But these travelers had the advantage of the Hazen Military Road to travel on from Newbury to within a short distance of their destination in Hardwick. The Burke settlers in and after 1795 found roads almost impassable between Newbury and Lyndon, and beyond that point into Burke only a path marked by blazed trees. "Shanks' Mare" was not an unusual mount for the men, horse and sidesaddle for the women.

In 1805 Norris Walter disposed of his part of the land that he and Augustus had cleared and moved to East Haven, where his younger brother, John Junior, had moved the year previous as the first settler. Both lived long and prospered there, except that about 1812

Norris had a temporary setback when his house was destroyed by fire while he and his wife, Elizabeth White, were away visiting in Connecticut; and that John and his wife, Uneca (Eunice?) Blakesley, between August, 1810, and August, 1815, had borne and then lost four babies, none of whom lived to be a year old. Both brothers took an active part in town affairs. Most of their very large families of children settled near them, though a few, including Norris's oldest daughter Harriet and her husband, Peter Atwood, followed the trend of many young people of the time into "The West"—New York State, Ohio, Minnesota. But there were so many left that for years it used to be said that East Haven was "all Walters."

In the last few years of his life *John Walter*, father of Norris and John, left Burke to join his sons in East Haven, doubtless after the death of his wife. He lived to be 101. Was it this John Walter, brother of Lemuel and Daniel, or the younger John, who built the mill for turning wooden dishes on the pretty stream that flows off Burke Mountain and unites with the East Branch of the Passumpsic in the present village of East Burke—the Dishmill Brook?

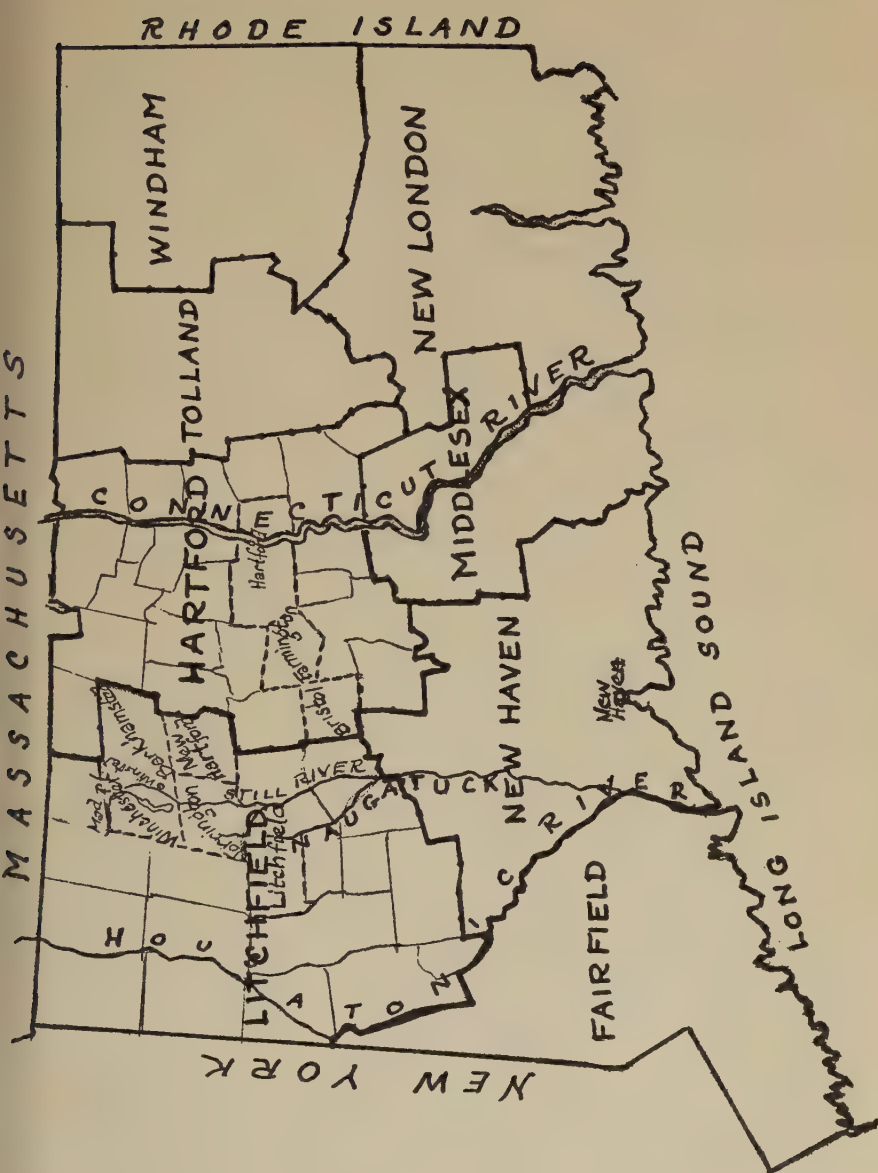
Augustus, remaining with his father, Daniel Walter, on the school-right farm, extended his holdings as time went on. In 1805 he married a "schoolmarm," Abigail Porter, whose sister Ruth was Mrs. William Woodruff who lived on Burke Green. Abigail took her husband in hand and taught him to read and to write a neat script, for he had come to Burke without schooling. In time a frame house took the place of the cabin, to be replaced about 1841 by the present brick dwelling in which their descendants still live. But all this is taking us far beyond the time of the 1800 census, to the years when Abigail and Augustus were grandparents in their turn.

## THE CONNECTICUT HOME OF THE BURKE SETTLERS

What was the previous background of the Burke pioneers? What were the circumstances of their life downcountry? Why did they leave the Wooden Nutmeg State for new homes in the Vermont wilderness? For the answer to such questions one has to transfer from the Vermont scene to Connecticut.

Since Burke was uninhabited in 1790, one would expect to find some traces of the families we have been considering in the returns





from Connecticut for that year, and only a hasty glance through the census for Litchfield County shows it to be peppered with names familiar in Burke: Barbour, Brockway, Coe, Humphrey, Leach, Moses, Spencer, Walter, and Woodruff of the 1800 census list, as well as Fyler, Gleason, Agelstone (Eggleston?), and White, all surnames of early settlers who came only a little later than the others. There are swarms of Tuttles, the family of the mother of Lemuel, John, and Daniel Walter. And the occurrence of the odd Christian name of Zebina, though with the surname Smith, makes one wonder if here was a relative of Zebina Wilder of Lyndon and Burke. Further study would no doubt reveal further correlations.

The name of the town of Winchester itself does not appear separately in the 1790 returns. A note explains that by some clerical error of long ago a number of towns in Litchfield County, among them Winchester, were lumped together under the *town* of Litchfield. But *Annals of Winchester* by John Boyd, published in Hartford in 1873 after the Centennial of the town in 1871, helps to track the Burke pioneers to their very doorsteps in Winchester and its east parish of Winsted, from which many of them came.

Winchester, Connecticut, about twenty-five miles northwest of Hartford, is in the eastern part of Litchfield County. Barkhamsted is the town to the east, and Torrington to the south. A narrow lake situated a little to the east of the center in the southern part of the town and another smaller pond drain into the Mad River, which flows into the Still River; this is a branch of the Naugatuck, which joins the Housatonic near the coast and flows into Long Island Sound. Litchfield County is a hilly region of many fine springs of water.

Winchester was a young town when the Revolution broke out, for it had been incorporated only since 1771, at which time "The Society of Winchester," that is, the church group, which under the theocratic government of Connecticut was the same as a town organization, had "28 families embracing 179 souls, and in the township and out of the Society 4 families, estimated at 26 souls," a total of 32 families and 205 persons. By the end of the Revolution the population had grown to 685 white people and 5 blacks.

Malicious persons said that the area had been settled by people who wanted to evade military service. However that may be, seventeen young men are listed among the soldiers who went to Fort Ticonderoga under Ethan Allen, a military movement that emanated, leader and all, from Connecticut; among them were Hawkins Woodruff,

Oliver Coe Senior, Noah Gleason, Junior, and Ebenezer Coe. In 1778 a muster roll of Captain John Hill's company, taking in all subject to military duty in town, even though not all or even a large part of them were on active duty in New York, includes the names of Lemuel and John Walter, John Spencer, and Abner Coe. In 1780 Daniel Walter served in Colonel Swift's Regiment. But the military records that have been preserved are very imperfect, and many have been lost. Probably all able-bodied men in town were repeatedly called in the drafted militia to protect threatened points during the long struggle with the British.

One respected citizen of the town, and later of Burke, was *William Barbour*, a tailor by occupation, a native of Paisley, Scotland, who deserted the British Army brought to this country at the beginning of the Revolution, and became a resident of Winchester as early as 1778. He married and lived there until 1798, then moved to Burke, where he was regarded, as in Winchester, as a pious and highly estimable man. The first marriage in Burke was that of his daughter Esther to John Woodruff, on December 4, 1799.

On September 1, 1777, a group of twenty-one men of the east part of Winchester, among them John and Lemuel Walter, addressed a petition to the General Court of Connecticut, asking to be permitted to join with people in the west section of Barkhamsted, the next town to the east, to form a new church in the Winsted section of town in which they lived. "The greatest part of the land is held by wealthy proprietors," they complained, "residing in other towns and not disposed to sell or settle." They might have said, too, that these wealthy proprietors had not seen fit to appropriate any land for schools, as was usual in laying out new towns, an omission which must have worked hardship on the townspeople. It is a "new, rough, heavy-timbered place," said the petitioners. The inhabitants, about 130 souls, were very largely cut off from church attendance in Winchester by Long Lake that lay between, just as their neighbors in the west of Barkhamsted were cut off from their church home by the "rough and ragged mountains" that ran through their town. They wished to join in one church society.

Evidently the petition was granted, for the oldest complete tax-assessment list of the town that is still extant, that of 1783, enumerates the taxpayers in two groups: the Winchester Society, where appear the names of Coe (including Abner), Leach, Spencer, Daniel Walter, and Woodruff, and the Winsted Society, where there were people of



the names of Porter and Spencer, as well as Henry, John, and Lemuel Walter. But the matter of getting a meeting house was not successfully carried out for thirteen years. From 1780 to November, 1793, a great many sites were proposed by a series of committees and vigorously turned down by the church members, before a decision was reached and the plain little 50' by 40' building was at last opened for use.

Taxes in Winchester were raised on polls, oxen, cows, steers, heifers, horses, swine, smokes (that is, fireplaces or chimneys: one in good repair was taxed at 15 shillings and those in "low repair" at 7 shillings sixpence), plow land, meadow land, bog meadow land, bush pasture land, timberland, silver watches, of which there were three in town, and the businesses of three taverners, one storekeeper, one owner of a grist and saw mill, two shoemakers, and one physician.

The condition of the Winsted section of town in 1781 is shown in a memorial to the General Assembly of Connecticut, dated June 12:

*. . . we are inhabitants of the east part of Winchester . . ., being the newest and youngest part . . ., having just begun under low circumstances on new and uncultivated and exceedingly heavy timbered lands, the expenses of the town and this society being greater than in older places; having no meeting house, nor minister settled in this society, most of us not having houses for ourselves scarcely to defend us from the inclemencies of the weather, and a number without barns; our families consisting chiefly of small children that cannot provide for themselves; having many of us a considerable part of our provision to buy at a distance in these difficult times, expenses arising almost on every hand, and but little profit arising from our labor or lands; our quota of men to find for the army and to provide for, which comes very heavy on us; a considerable of a tax arising on these lands, which are wild and useless at present to us. We therefore, your Honors' Memorialists, humbly pray that you would be pleased to compassionate us, in our infant and weak condition, and suffer us not to be crushed in the bud of our being by having more laid on us than we are able to bear; but that your honors would be pleased to exempt us from county taxes, until it shall appear your duty to lay them on us, and we have ability to pay them. As in duty bound*

*your memorialists shall ever pray. Dated at Winsted, 12th June 1781. [Signed by 19 men, including John and Henry Walter.]*

This was in 1781. In 1780 the Continental currency had collapsed, and the whole country was pauperized. Though Connecticut had not issued much paper money as compared with some of the other states of the Confederation, and in 1780 adjusted the relations between debtors and creditors so that, as John Fiske remarks in his *Critical Period*, "it left her people poor but able to wait for a better time," it was a period that bore down hard on citizens with small resources. In Massachusetts the situation of poverty and debts led to Shays' Rebellion (1786, 1787). In Rhode Island it led to extravagant issue of paper money. In Connecticut in 1787 the economics were further upset by the heavy duty on the firewood supplied to New York City by the Connecticut farmers, and the retaliation voted by the merchants of the state—a year's embargo on sending goods of any kind from the Wooden Nutmeg State to New York City.

Fortunately the adoption of the Constitution soon after did away with this and other private bickerings between states. But it was the same general condition of poverty among the people in the hilly, backwoods settlements of many states that several years later flared into the Whiskey Rebellion (1791, 1792), when the new Constitutional Government tried to raise money for frontier protection against Indian outrages by laying an excise tax on one of the settlers' most salable and easily transported products, whiskey from their patches of corn, rye, or potatoes.

All this financial upheaval—the loss of the Wyoming Valley, which Connecticut had claimed and settled, but which was awarded to Pennsylvania whose settlers proceeded to make it hot for the men from Connecticut, so cutting off in 1782 another outlet for the impoverished; the loss of days and days of labor on their farms by men called out as soldiers in the Revolution; the slowness of pay to the Army—all these distresses played their part in making the wilderness land in Vermont, which was available under better financial arrangements, look good to the Winchester farmers who migrated to Burke from 1792 forward.

The Walter family felt the press of circumstances first-hand. In 1793 Henry Walter's land was taken on an execution for debt.

## SCHOOL IN WINCHESTER

A man who attended school in the Winsted section of Winchester about 1799, quoted in *Annals of Winchester*, gives us further glimpses of the Connecticut environment. The schoolhouse, he said, was originally painted red, but had come to have a dirty, brindled look. There was a big stone fireplace at the north end, flanked by two doors, one leading through an entry to the outside, the other giving on a dark closet, called "The Dungeon" for reasons which need little explanation. A smaller fireplace of a later date was set in the south wall. Writing desks fronting inward stood on the east and west walls. In the center were two rows of benches of hemlock slabs for the littlest scholars. These were supported by rough-hewn logs and were uncomfortable perches without back and so high that most children's legs could not reach the floor. The teacher's desk, a mere platform of boards mounted on a big sawhorse, completed the furnishings. But there was a little brook in the rear of the school where the children fished and paddled.

"It is hard to realize," said the author of the *Annals*, "that before there were half a dozen dwellings along the Mad River, this schoolhouse was overflowing with strapping boys and girls from the surrounding hills." From "Spencer Street" he names twelve families, among them Spencer and Walter; from "Coe Street," five families, including the Coes; and from the upper part of "Lake Street," nine families none of whose names appear in Burke early history, except that Andrew Walter, one of the sons of the older John Walter, returned from Burke later on to marry Abby Westlake, a girl from one of these families, and then lived on in Winsted.

Major Isaiah Tuttle of Torrington, whose daughter married Eber Walter, Andrew's younger brother, who also returned from Vermont for his bride and then emigrated with her to the West, had to have his little joke about some of the residents of the Winsted section. "A hardy race of pioneers," he remarked. "They sift their corn meal for hasty pudding through a ladder, and their heels are so hard and flinty from working barefoot in the stubble fields that if they happen to tread on the hoofs of their cattle, it will make the creatures bellow!" Perhaps the Major was teasing his daughter about the man of her choice. I do not know. But fathers of the twentieth century sometimes become facetious in similar vein at the expense of a prospective son-in-law.

Costumes in the Winsted school were not those of today. The boys wore butternut coats, generally too small to button around their bodies



and held together with wide leather straps. In winter they had high-peaked woolen caps of alternate stripes of color and long leggings of mixed sheep's wool tied close to their cowskin shoes with tow strings to keep out the snow and the cold. Girls wore winter dresses of camwood colored cloth or of red flannel, and in summer calico petticoats or homemade gingham ones, and short-gowns with pockets fastened outside around the waist, like Lucy Locket of the nursery rhyme, who lost her pocket.

As in schools of any period, there were teachers better or teachers worse, and it was the tone they gave that made the school. Some, both men and women, were all too handy with canes and switches; there was one heartily detested man who called the pupils in from the playground and marshalled them into the floor for recitations entirely by the hiss and crack of his large, ugly whip. Others were remembered for kindness and fine manners and real ability to teach. There was even one much-loved schoolmistress, gentle Miss Sally Sherman, who did not switch the littlest scholars or shut them up in "The Dungeon" when they got so tired and sleepy, and their little swinging legs so numb, that they tumbled off the hemlock-lab benches; instead she had a big warm blanket in the middle of the floor, where in regular nursery-school fashion she gently laid the sleepy children, often having as many as six little people at a time taking a nap while she went on with lessons with their big brothers and sisters.

No doubt school then, as now, suffered from losing teachers to the armed forces. Between that, and the failure of the proprietors to provide support for schools by a land grant, and the necessity of staying out to work in place of their fathers and other relatives on farms left short-handed whenever the militia was called out, doubtless many a big boy left school virtually illiterate or didn't get any schooling at all. And then in the after-war period, when Augustus Walter's education should have been going forward, it was all scratching gravel to keep alive at home, or doing the same if one went off pioneering to new scenes.

Such was the Connecticut home of the Burke pioneers, where they failed to prosper, not so very different from their new Vermont homes where they also suffered hardships and worked hard, but on the whole managed to build a good life. When "Leila Lyndon" (Miss Susanna Burt) was writing obituaries for the Danville *North Star* after the death of True Blake Walter, a Civil War grandson of Augustus, and of Augustus himself, both of whom died in 1864, she spoke of them as having enjoyed a home of affluence. And it was so.

How it came to be so, for them and for many of their neighbors, can best be understood by something the pioneer Augustus ("Granser" he was called by then) said to his older grandson and namesake, "Young Gust." They had been out salting the cattle in the peace of a late Sunday afternoon. Granser, straight as an arrow and very spry, marched with evident enjoyment over the smooth pleasant slopes of the fields with Burke Mountain looking on.

"Gust," said Granser suddenly, "sometime, I suppose, you will be tempted to sell the farm and go off out west somewhere like a lot of the other young folks these days. But before you let the farm go, Gust, I want you to consider well how your old Granser's foot has stepped right down heavy on every inch of it."

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# Boundary Controversy

## THE BROWNINGTON-JOHNSON LAND PROBLEM

By VIRGIL L. McCARTY

*Students of Vermont history are very justly fascinated by the intricate and diversified nature of the famous land controversy which, at one time, was on the verge of precipitating a war<sup>1</sup> between the inhabitants of the "New Hampshire Grants"<sup>2</sup> and the government of New York. To no less an importunity were the early Vermonters led by their land affairs, simply because they were that important.*

*The famous but baffling Brownington-Johnson boundary controversy, which has resulted from an unfortunate combination of inconsistencies, indifference, and carelessness, has come down through the generations to annoy present-day historians and amuse story-tellers. An analysis of this case should serve to present, in bold relief, the story of the early land problems and the very pronounced effect they have had on current town, county, and state affairs, particularly of a jurisdictional nature.*

*One reason, perhaps, why this matter has been so lightly touched upon in historical literature is that it is so involved, complicated, and obscured behind piles and piles of the oldest Vermont documents as almost to defy analysis. At best, if the whole story be told, it cannot be made simple, because it is definitely not simple. It is hereby offered primarily for the benefit of serious students of Vermont history. It should, however, make interesting reading for anyone possessing a fair measure of intellectual curiosity of a romantic nature.*

1. Excellent historical summaries on the arguments, pro and con, relating to this famous controversy can be found in the following materials: An address by Hiland Hall to the New York Historical Society under the title, "Why the Early Inhabitants of Vermont Disclaimed the Jurisdiction of New York and Established an Independent Government," separate pamphlet in the possession of the Vt. state law library; and a "Review" of M. B. Jones' *Vermont in the Making*, by John Clement, in Vt. Historical Society *Proceedings* for Sept., 1939. More extensive collateral studies are: Hall, Hiland, *Early History of Vermont*, chapters I-XX; Jones, M. B., *Vermont in the Making*; also Crockett, *History of Vermont*, chapters X and XI.

2. Before Vermont declared its independence and adopted its present name, the same territory was commonly referred to as the "New Hampshire Grants," Crockett, *History of Vermont*, Vol. II, pp. 187-189; Slade, *Vermont State Papers*, p. 66.



MAP A



## THE BLESSING OF LAND

WHEN the young state of Vermont first took charge of its own political destiny in the desperate year of 1773,<sup>3</sup> New Hampshire had granted one hundred forty-four townships<sup>4</sup> within her limits, leaving a large section of the central and northern portions of the new state unappropriated. This constituted, in effect, a vast storehouse of wealth for whomever could maintain possession of it; for land was in great demand, and fees were willingly paid.

Under the terrific pressure of the national crisis then ravaging the colonies—not excluding the “New Hampshire Grants,” added to the fierce duel with New York, all of which difficulties were multiplied by the normally trying circumstances under which frontiersmen then lived, little time was left for the careful attention that land affairs demanded in order that the consequences of negligent land-granting activities might be avoided. If they could have collected fees even three or four times for one piece of land (by granting it that many different times to as many different parties), they would have been almost justified in doing so, for, let us remember, when the revolution was over, all of Vermont’s internal problems were far from being solved. If they were to survive the war, and the subsequent hostility of Continental Congress, the states of New York, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire,<sup>5</sup> as well as severe internal dissension, they must have revenues to keep the feeble wheels of government in motion—or collapse. That they had the courage to defy Congress, the mighty British army just across

3. A documentary account of the original declaration of independence can be found in Slade, *Vermont State Papers*, pp. 66–81. See also Crockett, *History of Vermont*, pp. 176–196.

4. Slade, *op. cit.*, p. 70. See map A.

5. New York claimed all of Vermont; Massachusetts claimed all the territory north of the Massachusetts north line almost to the southern extremities of Lake Champlain by virtue of an old action of the General Court of Mass. Bay Company handed down in 1632, see *Provincial Papers of New Hampshire*, Vol. 1, p. 200. As late as 1781 there was a movement on the east side of the Green Mountains to unite those towns with New Hampshire in which it can hardly be expected that the government of this colony took no more than a passing interest, see *State Papers of Vermont, Journals and Proceedings*, Vol. 1, footnote p. 186.

the border in Canada, all their neighbors, and countless enemies within, all at the same time—and with success!—is a fact rarely found in the annals of the most heroic deeds of man. Yet, it is somewhat doubtful whether or not they could have accomplished this without the fees from land grants.

Revenues, then, were the crying need of the hour, and they were needed quickly to stem the tide of retrogression into chaos that the war had started. But it was nearly impossible to collect taxes. Land granting fees were the only solution. Consequently, in defiance of Continental Congress,<sup>6</sup> land grants were executed in haste.

Vermont was indeed fortunate to have at that time three statesmen of the highest order, Ira Allen, Ethan Allen, and Thomas Chittenden. Had the place of the activities of these three men been Philadelphia, New York, or some such centralized place, instead of the frontier, there is a fair chance that they would have become the George Wash-

6. When viewed against the background of the political struggle then going on with the British Government, the reply which the Vermont legislature made to the Continental Congress' orders for her to desist from granting any more land, is highly significant. Drawn up as "An Appeal to the Candid and Impartial World," it reads:

" . . . they (the people of Vermont) could not view themselves as holden either in sight of God or man to submit to the execution of a plan which, they had reason to believe, was commenced by neighboring States;—that the liberties and privileges of the State of Vermont, by said resolutions, are to be suspended upon the arbitrament and final determination of Congress, when in their opinion, they were things too sacred ever to be arbitrated upon at all; and what they were bound to defend, at every risk:—that the Congress of the United States had no right to intermeddle in the internal police, and government of Vermont:—that the State existed independent of any of the thirteen United States, and was not accountable to them, or to their representatives, for liberty, the gift of the beneficent Creator:—that the State of Vermont was not represented in Congress, and could not submit to resolutions passed without their consent, or even knowledge, and which put everything which was valuable to them at stake:—that there appeared a manifest inequality, not to say predetermination, that Congress should request of their constituents, power to judge and determine in the cause, and never ask the consent of thousands, whose all was at stake. They also declared that they were, and ever had been ready to bear their proportion of the burden and expense of the war with Great Britain, from its first commencement, whenever they were admitted into the union with the other states: but they were not so lost to all sense and honor that after four years' war with Britain, in which they had expended so much blood and treasure they should now give up everything worth fighting for—the right of making their own laws, and choosing their own form of government—to the arbitrament and determination of any man, or body of men, under heaven." Slade, *op. cit.*, p. 116.



ington, Thomas Jefferson, and John Adams of our illustrious history books.

That Ira Allen is now called the "Founder of Vermont" is hardly an exaggeration. He not only participated actively in the heat of the diplomatic, and some of the military, affairs of the time, but he engineered the indispensable land affairs. His mental resourcefulness revealed to him the extreme probability that the way land affairs were being handled would lead to dire consequences. He desperately tried to avoid them.<sup>7</sup> Irrefutable evidence of this is contained in the following letter written by him to the legislature at the close of his term of office as Surveyor General. It also helps to explain many problems that arose in the following study. It reads:

*To the Honorable General Assembly of the State of Vermont Convened in Hinesburgh—With Respect to Town lines in the Northerly part of the State notwithstanding the many imbarasments that has attended that Business the greater part of the Lines are Completed as will appear from the Charter hereinwith Exhibited—*

*Some measures ought to be taken that the Lines of Fairfield, Smithfield and Hungarford might be ascertained as a Number of Towns are dependent on them Towns—The Charter of Concord was taken out in my absence and was to be returned if I did not attest the bounds which has been Refused by me and as that Charter Contains more lands than the contents of six miles square the west line has not as yet been run—In Consequence of the Legislature giving wrong bounds to Topsham, the Lines of Topsham, Orange & Wildersburgh will need alteration.*

*Several Grants have been made in vague terms & the grantees have requested Bounds to contain more lands than has been common where the grants were explicitly made which have been refused & the Charters are not issued—Sundry other matters that respects the surveyors will be verbally mentioned for want of time to write them at large.*

*Ira Allen*

*Newbury, Oct 15, 1787.<sup>8</sup>*

7. See also an address by Ira Allen reprinted in the appendix of *State Papers of Vermont*, Vol. V.

8. *Manuscript State Papers*, Vol. 24, p. 24.

Ira Allen, first Surveyor General (1779-1787), was a very capable surveyor, and was, undoubtedly, better acquainted with land affairs than any of his colleagues. Yet his advice was often rejected, and was frequently not even asked for—town after town was granted without his approval. He strongly urged that all newly granted lands, as well as all territory that had not been granted, be carefully and completely surveyed by competent surveyors. He did succeed, however, in getting three important acts passed by the legislature which implemented many of the plans he had so vehemently advocated.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, these did not end his difficulties, nor did they make any attempt to remove certain sources of trouble. It might be pertinent to mention that it would have been as difficult for Allen to have got the legislature to pass an act forbidding the granting of any more townships until the townships that were being granted were completely and accurately surveyed, as it would be to get a modern legislative body to pass an act forbidding the payment of any of the legislators' salaries until they had fulfilled all their campaign promises.

## II

### CONFUSION IN THE LAND OFFICE

THE dispute which originally took place between the proprietors of Johnson and those of Brownington is usually explained away by the following rather romantic but convincing story.

A certain Joseph Brown received a grant from Vermont legislature to a piece of land, which was located where the present town of Johnson is situated. This unfortunate Mr. Brown was captured by the Indians and taken to Canada where he was held captive for so long that he was given up for dead by the Vermont land granting authorities. Because this Mr. Joseph Brown was prevented, by his incarceration,

9. See "An Act for the regulation and Establishment of Town Lines" (ms), *Laws of Vermont*, Vol. 1, pp. 350-351. Also, "An Act, in addition to an act entitled, 'An act for the regulation and establishment of town lines,'" *Vermont Journal*, Jan. 25, 1785. Also, "An act in addition to an act entitled 'An act for the regulation and establishment of town lines,'" *Laws of Vermont*, Vol. 1 (1779-1786), pp. 373-376. These acts are immeasurably useful in explaining the probable causes of the wide variations between the legal definitions, and actual field locations of many of Vermont's town lines. They were all repealed, however, by an act which provided a new set of rules and regulations for the Surveyor General. *Laws of Vermont*, 1789, pp. 245-246.

from paying the usual granting fees, and considered dead, a new grant was issued for the same tract of land to a Samuel Johnson and his associates. Then Brown suddenly reappeared and was granted the present town of Brownington as compensation.<sup>10</sup>

Were the facts of this amusing tale well supported by documentary evidence, such a story would be very satisfactory indeed. But careful investigation discloses that no *Joseph* Brown ever received a title to land from the state of Vermont. And the Joseph Brown who was captured by the Indians and taken to Canada, where he was held in captivity for several years, otherwise lived and died in the township of Jericho.<sup>11</sup> But that there actually was a grant of a township by the name of "Brownington," made by the legislature, separate and distinct from that of Johnson, is plain enough.

On the twenty-third day of February, 1782, a legislative committee recommended the granting of the two following townships, along with seven others:

*That after a candid hearing of the several petitioners, they are of the opinion that there be granted unto the Rev'd John Edwards, Wm. Sam. Johnson Charles Chancy Esqs and Associates sixty-five in number one township six miles square lying north of and adjoining to Fletcher.*

*That there be granted to Timothy and Daniel Brown esqs and associates 65 in number one township six miles square—lying westerly of and adjoining to the west lines of Eden, Hidespard, and Morristown.*<sup>12</sup>

On February 26, 1787, the grant of the town of Brownington was effected.

*Resolved that there be and hereby is granted unto Timothy and Daniel Brown Esqurs and Company being sixty five in number one township of land bounded as follows—beginning at the North east corner of a township granted*<sup>13</sup>

10. Hemenway, *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, Vol. II, pp. 669–670. Also Child, *Lamoille and Orleans County Directory*, "History of Johnson," p. 104.

11. See speech by Buel H. Day, descendant of Joseph Brown in *History of Jericho*, pp. 91–95.

12. *Vermont State Papers*, Vol. III, part 2, p. 69.

13. This undoubtedly refers to the report of the committee recommending the granting of Johnson (see above) since the actual granting of this township did not take place until the day after Brownington was granted. See *Vermont State Papers*, Vol. III, part 2, p. 85.



*by the Genl Assembly this Session to Johnathan Edwards and Compy<sup>14</sup> thence easterly to the north west corner of Eden thence Southerly on the west line of Eden, Hydes Park and Morristown, thence northwardly on the east line of a grant made to Colo Reed & Compy<sup>15</sup> on the east line of Fletcher, and on the east line of the grant first mentioned to the first mentioned bounds. . . .<sup>16</sup>*

According to the description given in this document, the township of Brownington was intended to be a gore to lie between the easterly lines of Johnson, Fletcher, and Sterling<sup>17</sup> and the westerly lines of Eden, Hyde Park, and Morristown; and it seems to come to a point at the southern extremity, as it immediately turns northward at its southern terminus proceeding along the easterly lines of Sterling, Fletcher, and Johnson.

To try to reconstruct this grant on the basis of current maps presents the impossible situation illustrated on map F, dashed lines. This is entirely beyond any possible semblance to the intentions of the land committee as expressed in their description of the intended boundaries of the grant as given above.

There now arises the problem of finding a map, current at the time these grants were made, which might have been the one on which the land committees based its grants before sufficient data had been accumulated by Allen and Whitelaw to make possible the construction of a complete map of the state—finished in the year 1796 by Whitelaw<sup>18</sup>—which could be considered accurate in any degree. This excludes, of course, any maps that were made since that time.

It will be noted that none of the original state maps among the Surveyor General's papers were made before the time James Whitelaw served in that office.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, they were all evidently made by him. And, since they do not even remotely resemble a situation such as we are in search of, we can assume that these maps were entirely

14. Town of Johnson.

15. Township of Sterling.

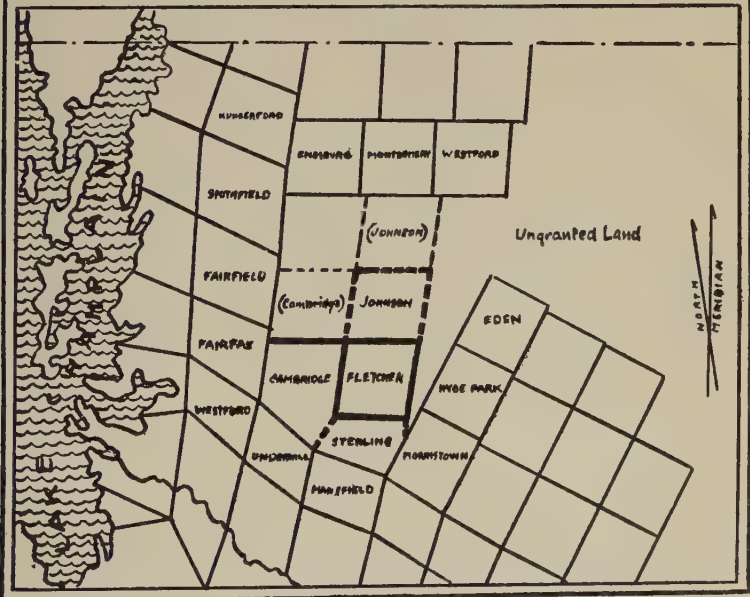
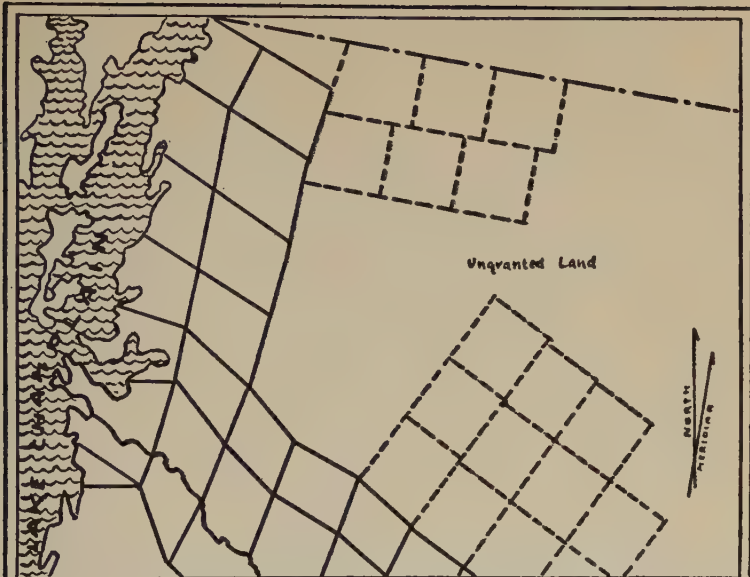
16. *Vermont State Papers*, Vol. III, part 2, pp. 79–80.

17. See bounds of Brownington given above.

18. See map opposite frontispiece in *Vermont State Papers*, Vol. II.

19. 1787–1804.

MAP B<sup>a</sup>



MAP C<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> BASED ON "CHOROGRAPHICAL" MAP, 300 p. 11

based upon Whitelaw's own surveys, and that they were influenced by no other documents whatsoever. There is, therefore, a great probability that they were radically different from the maps the land committee used from the beginning of the state's land granting activities in 1779 to the beginning of James Whitelaw's term of office as Surveyor General.

Preceding Appendix "J" of Vol. 8 of *Governor and Council* is a "Chorographical Map of the Northern Department of North America" which is purported to have been taken from the most authentic maps of that time. This map is believed to be complete to about the year 1779.<sup>20</sup> In all probability it provided the basis for Ira Allen's map so consistently referred to by the land committee of 1780. Here we find a peculiar set-up of the northern Lake Champlain grants which suits this investigation almost perfectly.<sup>21</sup>

But careful examination of this map forcefully suggests that its pointer designates magnetic north, and that the line representing the forty-fifth parallel of north latitude was carelessly drawn to the same compass direction.

Magnetic declination, at that time, is now estimated to have been about seven and one-half degrees.<sup>22</sup> But when we allow the full ten degrees—then generally accepted and applied—the general direction of the Onion<sup>23</sup> River and of the east shore of Lake Champlain assumes a more agreeable relationship to the same land marks on present maps.

Accepting this as conclusive enough, another dilemma presents itself, however. Did Ira Allen, in drawing his maps, correct the direction of the forty-fifth degree of north latitude? There is one bit of evidence that he did, e.g.: ". . . then east 10d South."<sup>24</sup> The implication here, when associated with Allen's letter,<sup>25</sup> is that these towns were to constitute a new tier of lots running parallel to the northern border of the state.<sup>26</sup>

There are more indications, however, that Cambridge and Fletcher were intended to join, or nearly so, the southern towns, instead of those

20. *Governor and Council*, Vol. 8, p. 435.

21. See map B, solid lines.

22. See *Report of the Vermont Commissioners on the Vermont and Massachusetts Boundaries*, July 26, 1900, p. 4.

23. Now the Winooski River.

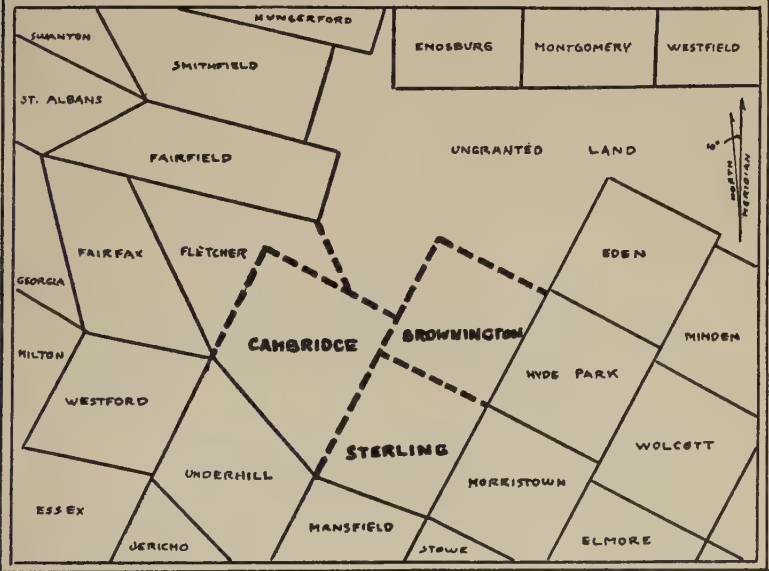
24. See definition of boundaries of Cambridge, *post*, p. 168.

25. See copy of same, *post*, pp. 169-170.

26. See map C.



MAP D\*



MAP E†

\* BASED ON "CHOROGRAPHICAL" MAP, See p. 11.

† BASED ON CURRENT STATE HIGHWAY MAP.

lying north. For instance, Cambridge was defined as bordering directly on Underhill, and the north line of Brownington was to proceed from "the north east corner of (Johnson) . . . to the north west corner of Eden."<sup>27</sup> Thus, by so placing these towns, we satisfy more conditions connected with the matter at hand than by beginning to lay out Cambridge "18 miles south of the Canadian boundary . . . in the easterly line of Fairfield."<sup>28</sup> Consequently, we arrive at a perfect set-up for the town of Brownington exactly according to directions given in the grant.<sup>29</sup>

However, Johnson's having depended on Fletcher, "north and adjoining" thereto, makes it necessary to locate Fletcher, which was west of Cambridge, before we can situate the Brownington grant. The exact locating of Cambridge obviously presented a problem to the authorities for some time. On November 7, 1780, Cambridge was granted by the legislature and described as township No. 47 on the Surveyor General's Plan.<sup>30</sup>

Evidently there was uncertainty as to where Cambridge and Fletcher belonged, for we discover in the Assembly Journals the following resolution:

*June 19, 1782—*

*Resolved that the bounds of said Cambridge be ascertained agreeable to the petition<sup>31</sup> viz—"beginning at a stake and stones on the East line of Fairfield eighteen miles from the North line of this State, then East 10d South six miles to a stake and stones, thence southwardly the same point of Fairfax East line about six miles, and eighty rods to the North East corner of Underhill thence Westwardly on the North line of said Underhill six miles to the North West corner thereof, which is the south East corner of Fairfax, thence Northwardly to the bounds first mentioned"—And*

27. See bounds of Brownington, pp. 163-164.

28. See map C, small dashed lines.

29. See map D.

30. *State Papers of Vermont*, Vol. III, part 1, p. 174.

31. If this petition could be found, it is very probable that it would supply the reason why this redefinition of the bounds of Cambridge and Fletcher was prescribed by the legislature.

*the same bounds of Fletcher be also ascertained according to the petition viz—"Beginning at the North East corner of Cambridge, thence running East 10d South Six miles to a stake and stones, thence Southwardly the same point of Fairfax East line six miles to a stake and stones, thence West 10d North six miles to the East line of Cambridge thence northwardly on said line to the first mentioned bounds."*<sup>32</sup>

Lacking the actual map which Allen and the land committee used, we must construct the "Onion" River grants, made prior to this time, the same as we believe Allen drew them on his map.

Having corrected the north line of the state—the 45th parallel of north latitude—to run due east and west, he naturally would have drawn these towns on his map to correspond with it. Therefore they would have made an angle with the old New Hampshire grants which ran along the "Onion" River. This done, we have a situation which is precisely what we want<sup>33</sup> to begin laying out the grants of Cambridge, Fletcher, Johnson, and Sterling, in order to determine the geographical relationships of the towns of Johnson and Brownington, and the probable position and shape of the latter.

To begin laying out these towns, according to the grants pertaining to them herein discussed, beginning at a point "18 miles South of the Canadian line," we find that Cambridge does not approach Underhill within several miles.<sup>34</sup> Here a letter of Ira Allen's to the House of Representatives comes to the rescue. It reads:

*Sunderland Jan. 10, 1782.*

*There appears to be misunderstanding between the members of the land committee that sett at Bennington in October 1780 some suppose the grant of Cambridge and Fletcher to have been such as to have joined them towns to the towns granted by N. Hampshire North of Onion River & others Supposed they were to be the fourth towns from the North line of the State which is most —— with the lines*

32. *State Papers of Vermont*, Vol. III, part 2, p. 105.

33. See map B.

34. See map C, small dashed lines.



*in the petition & agreeable to the wishes of most of the Grantees.*

*With Respect to the Vacant lands that were left suppose it will make no material odds which of the two ways are adopted. Shall wait your honors directions in measuring out the bounds for the aforesaid towns.*

*Ira Allen*<sup>35</sup>

This letter obviously does not entirely correct the situation, but it helps immeasurably, and it also suggests that at least certain ones were aware of a discrepancy in either their interpretation of surveys, or the surveys themselves.

Logically, however, it could not have been intended that the towns of Cambridge and Fletcher have common borders with Underhill and Mansfield, as this would have left no room for the grant of a new township "Southward of Fletcher, and Northward of Mansfield."<sup>36</sup> There is every reason to believe that this grant (of Sterling) was based on the above-given grants of Cambridge and Fletcher, for said grants of Cambridge and Fletcher were first authorized by the General Assembly Feb. 14, 1782.<sup>37</sup>

Therefore it becomes obvious by deduction, as well as by the content of Allen's letter, that there was a prominent element of confusion and ignorance regarding the extent of the ungranted land in Vermont at that time, especially as it concerned the distance between the southern extremity of the northern grants, and the northern extremity of the Onion River grants.

We are being unfair to ourselves to lay the cause for the inability to produce an exact map of this region to the lack of documentary information or insufficient research—with the exception, perhaps, that there might still be in existence somewhere one of Ira Allen's maps dealing with the northern section of Vermont. Lacking such a map, however, it seems that this regretfully circuitous method is the only possible means by which such a probable picture of the Johnson<sup>38</sup> and Brownington<sup>39</sup> grants can be re-created.

35. Ms. *State Papers of Vermont*, Vol. 24, p. 7.

36. See grant of Sterling, *State Papers of Vermont*, Part 2, p. 69.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

38. See map C.

39. See map D.

### III

#### ORIGIN AND NATURE OF CONTROVERSY

EXISTING records do not disclose the exact cause of the beginning of the controversy between the proprietors of these two towns, and it is obvious that there was no need for serious conflict as far as the actual location of the towns was concerned, that is, in respect to what the records of the land office then showed. Then, considering the confusion, referred to in the preceding chapter, regarding the position of the northern and "Onion" River grants of which Allen was well aware, as has been pointed out, and considering also the fact that the maps used by these early land officials must have been grossly in error, we have a right to assume that the initial difficulty arose out of the discovery that the grants of Cambridge, Fletcher, and Johnson had been based on an exceedingly incorrect map. It is highly probable that James Whitelaw—whose later maps attest to his superior knowledge as to the actual running of town lines—pointed out to his colleagues this error, and as early as 1785. For, in that year, we find the following record in *Governor and Council*:

*Monday October 24th 1785*

*Resolved that the following be the bounds of Cambridge, and that a Charter be made out accordingly in lieu of one that has been before given viz Beginning at Underhill northwesterly Corner Thence North 36 Deg East six Miles, Thence south 54 Deg East six miles—Thence south 36 degrees West to the Northeasterly corner of said Underhill, thence Northwesterly in the line of Underhill to the bounds Began at.*<sup>40</sup>

*Also that the following be the bounds of Fletcher agreeable to which the Charter of said Township may be Issued upon application, viz Beginning at the southwesterly Corner of Cambridge, which is the southeasterly corner of Fairfax, thence northerly in the easterly line of said Fairfax to the North Easterly Corner thereof, or to the line of Fairfield, thence Easterly in the line of said Fairfield so far that to turn southerly, a parallel line with the Easterly line of said Fairfax to the line of said Cambridge—Then*

40. See map E.

southerly in the line of Cambridge to the bounds begun at,—  
will contain the Contents of six miles square ——— no more.<sup>41</sup>

Also Resolved that the proprietors of Brownington shall  
have the land Granted to them, bounded south on Sterling,  
East on Hyde Park, west on Cambridge, and to extend  
Northwardly by extension of the East line of Cambridge,  
and the west line of Hyde Park (if need be) so far as to Con-  
tain the whole number of acres Granted. . . .<sup>42</sup>

The fact that the Johnson-Brownington dispute was, at this time, at its highest pitch, and the conspicuous absence of any mention of Johnson in this resolution seem to suggest quite strongly that the Brownington grantees were in favor with the legislature. Yet, extant records cast no light on whether or not any action was taken on this resolution. It had been resolved by the assembly, however, that holders of grants who had paid their granting fees and surveying costs have priority in the matter of surveys by the Surveyor General. This the grantees of Johnson had done.

A committee report of 1787, bearing upon the matter, reads as follows:

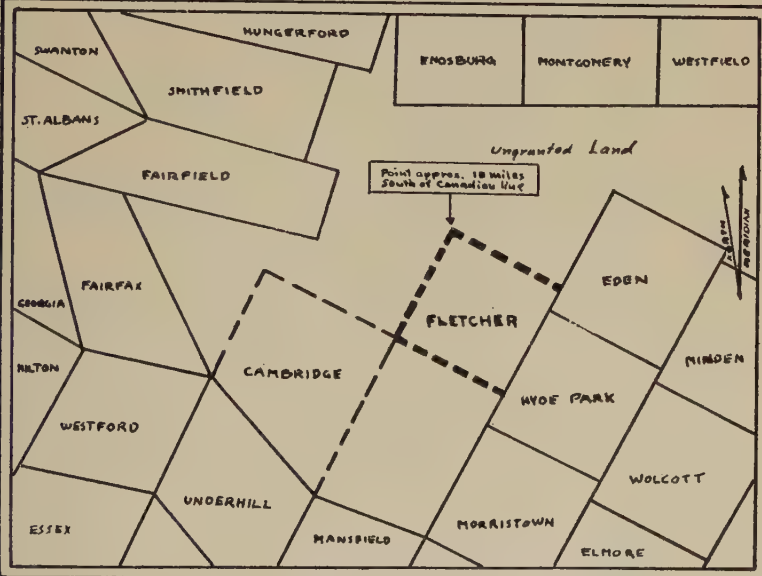
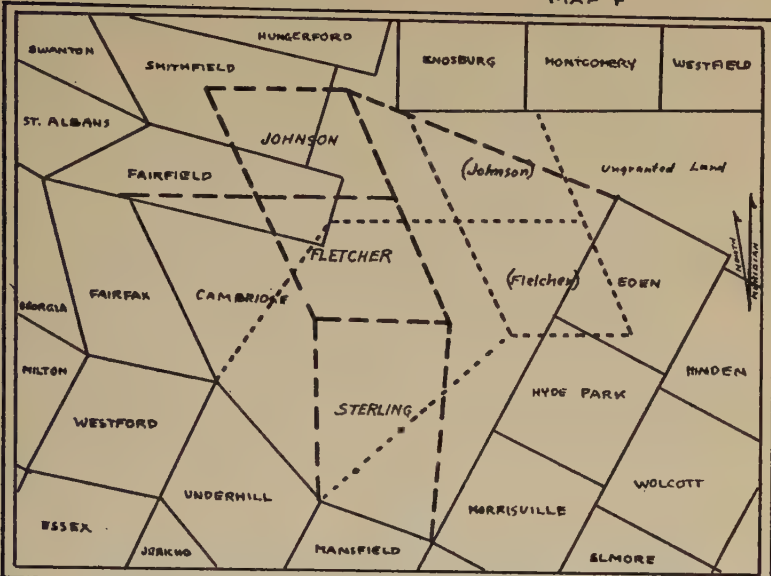
*Your Com'tee also find that no lines could be run for  
s'd Cambridge as Ordered by sd Assembly as no lines from  
any point six miles eastwardly of any part of sd fairfield east  
line Could be Run in the Course of Fairfax east line and  
Strike any where near any part of Underhill neither could sd  
line of Cambridge Run in what Direction soever from any  
point thereof to be less than fourteen Miles, If Cambridge  
was laid the proper length of lines, Setting off from any part  
of Fairfield, or the northeast corner of Fairfax<sup>43</sup> it must have  
been laid at a Greater Distance from that part of the Sur'yor  
Map marked A47. And Fletcher Laid Down, therefrom  
must have been many miles from the place marked N 46,  
and if Johnson was laid north of Fletcher as laid Down it  
would be Carried across Fairfield and Entirely out of any  
part of the land that was Intended to be Granted at Sd As-  
sembly and would leave a Gore for Brownington more than*

41. See map E, heavy dashed lines.

42. *Governor and Council*, Vol. 3, pp. 88-89. See map E.

43. See map F, broken lines.

MAP F



MAP G

THESE MAPS BASED ON CURRENT HIGHWAY MAP



*One hundred thousand Acres.<sup>44</sup> But if sd Cambridge was laid down with its proper length of Lines as Ordered at sd Assembly and the Southe End of the East line thereof at the northeast Corner of Underhill as Ordered by sd Assembly in June 1782 it would be Nearly where it now lies in the Actual Survey and as the Same is Chartered and Settled as Described on the map by No. 47 and Fletcher laid Down therefrom agreeable to the Resolve of Assembly would be nearly where the Same was Marked by No. 46 on the Plan. And Johnson if laid northwardly of and Adjoining on sd Fletcher so laid Down would be very near where the Contested Town is laid on the Actual Survey.<sup>45</sup>*

*Your Com'te also find that the Surveyor Gen by orders of the Gov'r and Council, by Agreement of the Claiments of Brownington Fletcher and Cambridge without notice of the Owners of Sd Johnson by such agreement laid Cambridge so far East that there is only room for one Town between the Same and the West line of Morristown and Fletcher is Removed to the North West of Cambridge by like Agreement<sup>46</sup> Your Com'tee also find that the Agents for Johnson Advanced 271 lb of Pork for Surveying the Township of Johnson and they find that—Previous to the Grants in sd feb. 82 Col Ira Allen had pitched a Grant north of Cambridge; That if Fletcher was Squared upon the N. E. of Cambridge Laid Down Eighteen Miles South of Canada line, there would be much more than One Township south of Fletcher and North of Mansfield<sup>47</sup> by order of Com'tee.<sup>48</sup>*

This committee report obviously ignored the resolution of Governor and Council of October, 1785. Furthermore, it is doubtlessly based on this new map of Whitelaw's<sup>49</sup> which throws completely out of

44. See map F.

45. This would make it seem that the report was based on the old map, but a careful examination of the Council resolution of October, 1785 (given above), precludes any such probability. See map E.

46. See resolution of Governor and Council, *Governor and Council*, Vol. 3, pp. 88–89.

47. See map G.

48. Reports of Committees of the General Assembly, *State Papers of Vermont*, Vol. IV, pp. 49–50.

49. See *Surveyor General's Papers*, "Plans," pp. 19, 20, 29; also Vol. II, p. 59.

bounds the original grants of Cambridge, Fletcher and Johnson, leaving no logical territorial situation for the satisfaction of the original grant of Brownington.<sup>50</sup>

In the *Journal* of the proceedings of the House for the day following the passing of the foregoing resolution, a record appears which states:

In General Assembly, October 23, 1787—

*Agreeable to order the House took under consideration the report of the Com't on the petition from the proprietors of Johnson, which being Read and after hearing the Council for the Proprietors of Johnson and the Counsel for the proprietors of Brownington—The question being put whether the prayer of the petition be granted—It passed in the affirmative and thereupon,*

*Resolved that the Governor and Council be and hereby are requested to issue a charter on incorporation to Johathan Edwards, Wm Sam Johnson, Charles Chancy & Com'p of a township of land by the name of Johnson, lying and bounding Southerly on Sterling, Easterly on Hydes Park, Northerly on lands ungranted, & Westerly on lands un-Granted and on Cambridge East line said township to contain the quantity of 23040 acres. . . .*<sup>51</sup>

The Governor and Council did not approve of this grant and refused to allow the State Seal to be affixed to the Charter,<sup>52</sup> doubtlessly because nothing had been done to compensate the proprietors of Brownington.

Little more that is definite appears in the state archives concerning the controversy until the issuing of the charters—Brownington, October 2, 1790,<sup>53</sup> Johnson, January 2, 1792,<sup>54</sup> which pitched the towns where they now lie. And so closed the Brownington-Johnson controversy, which might never have taken place had greater care and pains been exercised in the discharging of land affairs, or had Ira Allen received more cooperation when he was head of the land office.

50. See map F.

51. State Papers of Vermont, Vol. III, part 4, p. 42.

52. Governor and Council, Vol. III, pp. 156-157.

53. State Papers of Vermont, Vol. II, pp. 32-34.

54. *Ibid.*, pp. 111-113.

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# Narrative of Urieh Cross

## IN THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

*Urieh Cross's narrative, submitted as a pension application, is concerned chiefly with Allen, Arnold, and Montgomery's Champlain and Canadian campaign. While for the most part it adds little new to the story, it does provide some corroboration of matters with regard to which we have previously had somewhat isolated testimony, as, for example, Allen's capture at Montreal.*

*The narrative is written with the usual lack of concern for spelling and punctuation. Both have been corrected to make the reading easier, but this is about the limit of the alterations to the original text. At points, it partakes of that wry Yankee humor so frequently and often unconsciously expressed in laconic understatement. Cross, describing the capture of Ethan, says: "I was nigh him—thought it was time to clear out; my companions took the hint. . . . We escaped by putting the best foot forward."*

*The original manuscript of this narrative is in the hands of Miss Mellicent E. Blair, 10 St. Francis Place, Brooklyn, N.Y., according to Miss Alice E. Southworth, to whom we are indebted for the first, nearly literal transcription.*

EDITOR

**T**OLAND, CONNECTICUT, was my native place. I went into Vermont three years previous to the war. By my labor I obtained \$487.00 in silver dollars. I now had the money with me looking for a place to purchase a farm. I met with Ethan Allen whom I had been acquainted with at Connecticut now in Rutland, Vermont. I stated my business to Allen (he was the only man in that part of the country of my acquaintance); he urged me to enlist. I told him I did not know what to do with my money, I was afraid I should lose it.

He counseled me to exchange it for continental money—I could swap it for continental \$30.00 bills. I followed his advice, took it in



\$30.00 bills, put them in my pocket book and agreed to march with him.

I entered the army on May 9, 1775, a volunteer under Captains Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold at Rutland, Vermont. [We] marched to Ticonderoga and took possession of the fort. It was garrisoned by a British lieutenant and forty-nine men. We then marched to Crown Point and took the fort. It was guarded by a lieutenant and eighteen men. We then marched and took St. Johns. This was guarded by a lieutenant and forty-nine men. We took a sloop loaded with thirty stands of arms, six small cannon, other public property sufficient to load it [and] returned to headquarters at Crown Point.

I then embarked with a party on board the sloop to Skenesborough. Skene was there, a British half-pay officer. We took a schooner lying in the harbor. Here Allen and Arnold divided the command. Allen took the command by land and Arnold by water. I now enlisted on board the sloop as sergeant of marines under Arnold. After reconnoitering the lake we returned to headquarters.

Colonel James Easton and Major John Brown arrived with a regiment from Pittsfield, Massachusetts. They stationed also at Crown Point.

I was sent with a spy boat with five men and written orders from Arnold to keep on the west side of the lake until within a mile and a half of St. Johns, turn west into the mouth of a small creek, then conceal myself through the day to watch the motion of the enemy. The instant we had fairly entered the creek we were discovered by two enemy boat crews on the east side of the lake. It was now the time of day light first appearing in the morning. We turned and rowed back as fast as possible. When we had got out so as to turn the point the enemy was within thirty or forty rods of us in full chase. We hoisted our sail and with our oars pulled off. The enemy fired on us with their muskets which cut our sails so that it disabled. It was riddled with bullet holes.

I sat abaft steering the boat, was wounded by a musket ball on the knee. I had on a pair of buckskin breeches. My knee was bent when the ball struck it. It made two holes in my breeches an inch and three quarters apart. In passing from one side to the other it cut or split my kneecap in the middle. Another ball nigh the same time lodged in an oar in the hands of John Ludenton opposite his breast. It stuck in the oar.

We were pursued in this way about nine miles. They were nigh

overtaking us. We thought best to run the boat ashore and leave it. Our boat struck ground fifteen rods from shore. We seized our guns and leaped into the water, made shore as fast as possible. I arrived on shore by the aid of John Lyon. The other four took to the woods as fast as they reached shore. I hobbled off as fast as I could, Lyon leading me, we without a compass, the shore was our guide. Travelling a mile we came to the shore, the enemy had taken our boat rowed to this spot with the oars. A path led to shore. It was impossible to pass it undiscovered. They was fifteen rods from us leaning on their guns watching when we discovered them. We counseled ourselves how to pass the path undiscovered. We trailed our guns, endeavored to leap across the path. They discovered us, called aloud to surrender. We fired at them and ran into the woods (or rather a morass covered with brakes nearly as high as my head) twenty rods. We came to a large elm tree, it had been partly blown over, and I stood leaning against another tree.

The roots had risen more than a rod of ground sufficiently high enough for us to slip under. We descended in quick time and lay secure.

The enemy passed by so nigh I could have touched their feet with my gun. We lay still until they had finished their search. All was still. We pursued our way. The day being cloudy we depended on the shore as our guide. Being a little bewildered [we] traveled a mile or two, came to the shore again. Here we met the enemy again. They had moved along with their boats as fast as we traveled. They had landed and stood leaning on their guns. We fired on them again. They jumped into their boats and shoved off.

We pursued our course by the shore four days and three nights without seeing any mortal being, entirely destitute of any kind of food, [and] reached Cumberland Head. Here we met Lieutenant Armstrong with two boats in search for us. We returned to headquarters at Crown Point.

Colonel Hinman had come on and took the command at that place. Arnold received a colonel's commission and orders to repair to Boston. I, being lame of my wound, was dismissed but stayed in camp in June 1775.

Some of the last days of July General Schuyler came on and took the command. I had now recovered in part of the wound, thought I could do duty again. I now enlisted again for six months in Colonel Easton's regiment, as a sergeant in Captain Cockrin's company. No business of importance except reconnoitering and scouting up and down the lake. My time was spent in that branch of duty.

In one of these expeditions I was ordered to choose twelve men to go on a scout thirty days to Gildland's [Gilliland's?] creek. The eighth day after we started we took eight prisoners in the bay of Perue. With these we returned to headquarters.

Captain Remember Baker was sent at this time on a scout being gone longer than was expected. I was sent to join him with provisions. I met him at Cumberland Head, came down to Grand Isle, together landed and were discovered by a party of Indians and a number of the enemy. They fired on us and killed Captain Baker.

We returned to our boats and shoved off. When the enemy had gone out of sight we returned back to the island and found Baker with his head and hands cut off and missing. We returned to headquarters. I went direct to Allen and informed him of the affair.

Allen smote with his fist on his knee and swore, "By the great Jehovah, vengeance is mine—I will repay, saith the Lord." Lieutenant Armstrong was sent on a scout and took three men prisoners who informed him that Baker's head was stuck on a pole fourteen feet high standing in the parade grounds at St. Johns and the Indians used the fingers of his hands to stir their liquor.

Allen raved and swore by all that was great and good, (I thought it hardly possible for Caesar or Pompey, Hannibal or Scipio to harangue their men in a higher air or in bigger words) that he would have the head. He was soon on a start with a party of volunteers of whom I was one. We went in a boat to the Isle of Noar-thane [Noix?]. He left his boat and men except myself. We went with a small skiff and landed within forty rods of St. Johns fort. We then crept on our hands and knees some twenty or thirty rods, then waited until the sentry was relieved. By this we found where they were stationed. Still on our hands and knees we traversed the parade ground until we found the pole, took the head, returned with it to the boat and our party on the island. We buried the head with the body, then returned to headquarters.

Three days after a party of Indians came to our camp pretending to be friends and that they were hunters residing at Gildlands Creek. They were suspected as spies. They were treated as friends and returned. The next day I was sent (sergeant) with twelve men to watch their motions with orders not to let them carry tidings to the enemy. We arrived at Gildlands Creek, found them there still pretending to be friends. On viewing them, one I see had Captain Baker's powder-horn with Baker's name carved on it at full length, another had his

silver stockbuckle. As I had previously owned the buckle and sold it to Baker I knew it to be the same.

The Indians now wanted to move to the other side of the creek one mile north. I told them I was afraid they would go to St. Johns. They said "No, we no go to St. Johns, DAM reglar."<sup>1</sup> They put their effects into their canoes and started off. I with my men struck across the woods and got ahead of them unperceived. The Indians came round the point to the spot agreed on, landed their canoes, but did not unload them.

Here they lay around all day. We lay in the woods undiscovered watching them. Ten o'clock at night they started with the canoes, moved on slowly. We kept on the beach forward of them or rather a little back in the bushes. A mile and a half or more to a convenient spot round a point brought them close to shore. We fired on them. In their surprise upset three of their canoes. The four turned and struck out into the lake and went clear. Only one Indian came to shore. He said, "Quarter, quarter." I was reaching to take him by the hand when one of my men struck him with a hatchet and killed him, declaring he never would give quarters to an offending Indian. We killed eight in all the next morning, entered them all in one grave, and returned to headquarters carrying Captain Baker's powderhorn and stockbuckle with us.

General Montgomery now came on to Crown Point and rallied all the forces to go to lay siege to St. Johns, October 1, 1775.

The first day of embarkation the army reached Isle Noar [Noix]. Indians were discovered in the woods on the west side of the lake. Major Elmore called for volunteers to go on shore to attack them. Over one hundred turned out, of which I was one. We passed in our boats to shore. It was at the setting of the sun. We had not marched more than forty rods when the enemy fired on us. Two men were wounded. The Indians ran off raising a hideous yell. At that half our men turned back to the boats and to the island; the remainder encamped on the spot for the night without any fire.

The next morning we marched one and one half miles with a spy forward. He at length discovered the enemy. We marched up and fired on them and killed twelve on the spot. The remainder fled. They were white and Indians about equally mixed. We then returned to our regiment which proceeded and laid siege to St. Johns some of the first days of October.

1. Regular: the regular troops—trained soldiers.



I was now with Colonel Butler and Major Brown's regiments who met a number of teams going to St. Johns with provisions which were taken. Butler had his station here. Brown marched and took Chamblee.

I now, with a number of others, volunteered to go with Ethan Allen as our commander to take Montreal. We marched to Longale [Longevil] where we were met by the enemy and defeated. Allen and all his men in front with him were taken prisoners except Nathaniel Malery, John Burk, John Ludinton and myself. We escaped by putting the best foot forward. The last I saw of Allen he was surrounded, had hold with both hands [of] the muzzle of a gun swinging it round and round. At this instant [he] leaped on top of a long stump. I was nigh him, thought it time to clear out; my three companions took the hint.

I and my three companions joined Major Brown at Chamblee. With our information he started with all his forces down to Sorel in hope of intercepting the enemy, being very confident that Allen and his men would be conveyed to Quebec without delay. When we arrived at Sorel three vessels lay at anchor in the harbor, having Allen and his men on board.

Major Brown raised a breastwork in the same night he arrived, placed five cannon on it. These he brought with him. In the morning the enemy aboard the ships fired their morning gun before they discovered Brown's forces who stood awaiting the instant to return the fire from the battery. They cut their cables and shoved off as fast as possible, their rigging considerably cut. Brown stayed here three days. In this time captured eleven sail of British vessels coming down from Montreal loaded with merchant's goods.

Montgomery now came on having subdued St. Johns and placed a garrison of his own soldiers there. I now enlisted for six months. Brown now had vessels enough to embark the whole army, which being done and placed aboard sailed for the Point Trumble [Trembles?], twenty miles above Quebec. Here we arrived.

The first thing we soldiers did was to erect a breastwork nigh Quebec. The snow was three feet deep. We dug a trench in the ground, flung up dirt and snow f\*\*hens [?] and some bushes to make it stick together. We flung on water, the weather being very cold, so it might freeze. The snow and ice being indeed congealed, the whole embankment solidified together.

The fifteenth of December our breastwork was finished and opened. Our cannon played on the fortress of Quebec. The enemy opened a fire on our breastworks which greatly injured our breastwork. In two

hours we had eleven men killed. My business was to hand cartridges. Captain Babcock was on top of the breastwork making repairs. A cannon ball came and took the skirt of his coat entirely off. He kept his post, coolly remarked, "The British fire damned careless." After loosing eleven men orders were to retreat back to Abraham's Plains.

Arnold with his regiment went on before, built another breastwork from which he set the suburbs on fire with hot shot.

On the thirty-first day of December, 1775, preparation was made to enter the city, Montgomery to enter at Cape Diamond, Arnold to enter at St. Johns gate, Major Brown to give the signal for both to strike at a time. Montgomery and his aide marched in. They were discovered by his calling to his men. They had stopped at the entrance afraid to march on. Montgomery and aide were both instantly killed by a discharge of grapeshot. Colonel Cammil [Scammel?] ordered a retreat. Arnold, the same instant, entered the lower town and was wounded and carried out of the city. Major Goodrich and Captain Morgan took the command but were defeated, taken prisoners with about seven hundred men, all made prisoners. The army now retreated back on the plains.

Our army was, some number of them, taken sick with the small pox. A hospital was prepared at Wolf's Cove. (I had before gone through it and almost the only one in the army.) I was sent as agent under Doctor McRay from New York, to take down the names of the sick delinquents and the company they belonged and regiment, also take account of and charge of each man's pack and gun, to see that they were delivered to him if he got well, if he died, to the company to which they belonged. I continued in this business until nigh the last of April.

Adjutant Green had the small pox harder than usual with the soldiers that lived it out. He was in poor health. I was sent as nurse and water to take care of him six miles back in the country. He was almost covered with sores caused by the small pox. If I should at this time relate the distresses, sickness and numerous deaths in the hospital you would hardly believe it. Rising one hundred died of the small pox at Wolf's Cove in the course of the winter.

The ninth day of May, 1776, the British forces turned out and our army retreated before them toward Point Trumble [Trembles?]. I took care of Adjutant Green until that day. (He was from Rhode Island.) An express arrived with information, "The British have sailed out; our army is on the move." My pack and gun were in the

encampment. I was determined to have them. I hired the Frenchman (at whose house Green and I had resided) to carry him six miles on.

I now set out on foot after my gun and pack. I soon passed our army; soon after met the British army. As I was alone, not armed, I passed unobserved, unnoticed, and reached the camp safely. There I found my pack and gun, also a gun and pack belonging to Lieutenant Parmerly all in, also a pack and gun belonging to Captain Seth Wheeler who was gone to the Isle of Orleans. I also found Wheeler's trunk with three hundred silver dollars in it and a new suit of clothes. I shouldered three packs, three guns, three hundred silver dollars and clothes (well loaded down) and traveled off with all possible diligence.

I passed the British army again unnoticed. I concluded they thought I was a Frenchman and had been plundering. If they had said aught to me I would have answered in French. I understood in part the French language. The enemy had set the long building on fire that was Arnold's headquarters.

I traveled twelve miles with my back load, found Adjutant Greene sitting by the side of the road, having hobbled along three-quarters of a mile from where the Frenchman left him. He was unable to travel and entirely out of my power to assist him. He begged my assistance and shed tears. I could see no way to be of any benefit to him, traveled on, left him to the mercy of the Frenchmen.

I traveled with my load until night. I reached the army at Point Trumble [Trembles]; the next morning marched eight miles to Point De'Shambo [Deschambault?], under a continued fire from British men of war that had sailed up the river. The road was along directly on the bank. The road being higher than the river they could not make their cannon bear on us, nor small arms.

The River De'Shambo [Deschambault?], our army crossed it with one small boat and two canoes. All the time our army was crossing the enemy kept a continual fire of small arms and cannon.

The river has a short turn in it just at its entrance into the St. Lawrence round a high bank or bluff which prevented their doing us much injury.

Three boats were obtained here to convey the sick. I was sent Master of the boats to conduct them to Sorel. When we arrived there General Warner's regiment had arrived; came up on the east side of the river. Captain Wheeler and Lieutenant Allen were with them. I delivered to them the money, packs and guns which they had given up for lost. They gave me \$15.00 and were well pleased.

At this time our army was reinforced by General Sullivan who engaged in defense of the enemy. Otherwise our army without doubt would have been entirely cut off and lost.

Many were killed on both sides. General Sullivan's soldiers built a breastwork with the bodies of the slain to fight behind. After the battle Sullivan's army encamped at Sorel.

I was now sent on, commander of the three boats, to conduct the sick and invalids to Crown Point. An encampment was made at Chimney Point for those who had the small pox. Those that were taken with it in the army were sent here to take care of the new disease. I remained here three weeks as an attendant. In this time, as high as I can remember, five hundred men (soldiers) died of the small pox. It was calculated one died to every hour.

My time now expired. I took a discharge from Colonel John Brown as nigh as I can remember the first or second day of August, 1776.

The officers and a number of privates were anxious to have me enlist again and take a commission, which I declined as I had all ready been out fourteen months and some over. I chose to return to Connecticut.

In February 1777 I moved my family to Sunderland in Vermont. Here I resided until Ticonderoga was evacuated by General Gates, who was driven before the enemy down to where I lived. I now volunteered under Major Brown, Colonel Easton's regiment, and marched to take George's Landing. Here we took the British pay master and his guard with the money intended for the army. The enemy proceeded and drove us down to Bennington where a battle was fought. The Hessians were made prisoners. I was now full of business, assisting in driving of cattle and helping my family and other people to move off so that I was not there until the surrender, but soon enough to come in with the prisoners who were confined in the meeting house.

In October 1777 I volunteered to go to take Burgoyne. When I got there I was sent Sergeant of a guard to guard the horses belonging to the officers and army. In this duty I remained eight days then returned to Pittsfield, Massachusetts (took the horses along). The number of horses was sometimes more than thirty. Some were taken by the owners and others left every day. I now received a discharge from Colonel James Easton of Pittsfield.

I was now under the necessity of removing with my family to Cornwall in Connecticut.



June 26, 1778 I now enlisted under Captain John Insine of Canaan, Connecticut and Colonel Herees [?] Mosley's regiment, marched to Stanford—there were one hundred and fifty of our company—joined a regiment, stayed but twenty-four hours, marched to Horseneck, stayed here three days. Marched from there to White Plains, where our army stayed two days. We now were ordered to march to East Purchis. Here we stayed two weeks keeping guard, then orders to march back to White Plains. At White Plains we stayed two days, then orders to march by way of North Castle to West Point. Here our business and time was taken up in working on the fort—in building it and making a road from river up to the fort on the west side of the river. It is a hundred rods from the river to the fort about two thirds of the distance up a very steep hill.

My time was now out. Colonel Mosley gave me a discharge August 28, 1778, having served two months as a corporal (my warrant I now present to you).<sup>2</sup>

September 25, 1778 I enlisted under Sergeant Mon White (he had listing orders under Colonel Micks) for three months. White was a forage master. I enlisted with a span of horses. Our business was to carry loads from Newburgh Landing to the barracks at Fishkill. My loading was made up of bricks, iron and lead. When my time was out Colonel Micks was gone to West Point. I took my discharge from Mon White. For the last three months I never received one cent's value—the colonel being gone and White had not any money.

I agreed for \$10.00 per month, myself and horses, \$30.00 for the three months.

Tower to Quebec, \$9.00 per month (\$1.00 more than privates) fourteen months \$126.00. This I received all except \$40.00, that I have not received yet, Captain Robert Cochran at the time of discharge in continental paper money. He said he had not drawn any money, so the \$40.00 remain my due yet.

Lake George Landing tower twenty days received \$7.00 in thick paper dollars.

Taking of Burgoyne, twelve days, received nothing, spent \$3—  
—\$7.10

The tower in Captaine Insines Company, Colonel Mosleys regiment—two months—\$16—

Received—leaving \$70.00 of my soldier's wages yet behind with the interest.

2. This whole paper was written as a pension application.

The continental money I kept until I found out that it was going down to be of no value and I had shifted all the silver I could obtain into it. Even dollar for dollar, in the way of my deals, I had shifted my whole property into continental bills, to the amount of \$600.00. This I put off after at the rate of seventy-two paper dollars for one silver dollar.

I purchased one hen which I gave ten dollars for it, a second I payed twelve dollars. In this way I did worse than to sit down and done nothing, if I had kept the money I exchanged with Ethan Allen.

Finished January 14, 1828

Urieh Cross

(This narrative was carefully taken down from his lips)  
by Angel Mathewson

State of New York, Oswego County

Sworn before me this day

Simon Meacham, *Judge of Oswego County Common Pleas*

Papers filed by Urieh Cross on applying for a soldier's back pay and pension—January 14th, 1828.



# Upon This Sod

By CLARA M. GARDNER

*Though only God can make a tree  
Man can build a spire,  
With peace beneath its towering cross  
Enkindling his faith's fire.*

SO IT was in the state of Vermont, for on a summer Sunday in 1850, a group of Welsh immigrants held on the shores of Lake Bomoseen the first religious service in the state in the Welsh language. Three years later a religious organization was formed, holding services in the school house in Hydeville. Undoubtedly in both these events were those pioneers in slate quarrying, the Williams brothers, who opened slate quarries in Fair Haven and Grandville, "the first Welshmen to come to these parts to open slate quarries, in 1849"—the record states.

By 1857 Welsh people had come to the state in numbers so that a corporation, under the laws of Vermont and called the Welsh Protestant Society, was organized and a church building was erected during that year.

This new church corporation attested their faith through works, 45 Presbyterians contributing \$1,195.86—38 Congregationalists \$1,010.56 and 11 Methodist Episcopalians \$293.58—a total of \$2,500.

The church building, constructed in 1857, and the first religious edifice erected within that section of the state, after nearly ninety years, held its final service in July, 1946. This marks its discontinuance as a building in which to hold religious services and for the Welsh people of the Fair Haven area the conclusion of a significant period in the religious history of the community.

Following a special musical program, Mr. Benjamin Williams, former Lieutenant Governor of the State of Vermont, and executive

of the Vermont Marble Company, gave the principal address. "To one whose family was deeply interested in the building of this church, active through many years in its support and welfare, and who was brought up under its influence," he observed, "this service is one of reverence and sorrow, but also one of deep gratitude. I have a precious recollection of them and their associates who, for so many years, maintained this church as a positive force in the religious life of this town. I am deeply grateful to them for the training and influence given to me and for the discipline which I received (often with some grumbling on my part) at their hands. I can say truthfully that the training I received, particularly in the Bible, and in this church is not surpassed in any modern Sunday School with which I have had acquaintance during my mature life."

From old records Mr. Williams found these "founding Welsh fathers" were "not only idealistic but realistic." They provided in their Articles of Association that any time any denomination was dissatisfied with the arrangement, such should give notice and then the church would be put up at auction, subject to be bid off by any one of the denominations.

It was from a letter, written by Mr. John D. Jones (grandfather of Lawrence C. Jones, former Attorney General of Vermont) to his father in Wales, that Mr. Williams gleaned a description of a meeting, called Dec. 1859 to consider notice that the Welsh Calvinists did not wish to continue in the Association.

The reason? "A brethren of the Congregational denomination, while conducting a religious service, had invited a brother *under ecclesiastical discipline* to participate publicly in the meeting"—an act which was not tolerated by the Welsh Calvinistic members. So the other two denominations united and bid off the church. Then the Welsh Calvinistic-Methodist brethren built in the very next year (1860) a new church building directly across the street. Then for many years the two churches grew and prospered in the religious freedom of this new country.

As we remember, this was a critical period in our history. The slavery crisis and the threat of civil war were in the air. In 1860, there came to this united church a man about whom there was much controversy. He was unorthodox. He was twice tried for heresy by the Vermont Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Nevertheless a historian of Welsh churches and Welsh settlements in America in 1870 stated: "The Rev. R. L. Hebert took charge of the church



January 30, 1860 and from that time to this, his character has remained unspotted. He preaches to the Welsh and the English every Sunday. His writings and sermons have been matters of considerable attention but he continues in popularity and esteem in the eyes of many—his church loves and supports him. He and they are answerable to the great Head of the Church—that is, Christ.” Rev. Hebert’s pastorate ended in 1872. He went then to Geneva, Ill., and then to Denver, Col., where he died in the early ’80’s.

Quite modern, it seems, is this statement: “The panic of ’73 affected all Welsh churches in this area most adversely and for a period of ten years.” “About 1883 came a revival of religious interest and from that time until recent years the church flourished.”

This writer, not knowing that the Welsh people conducted their service by laymen, when they had no minister to lead them, was quite surprised when in attendance at an evening service to find the people, in the way of the Quakers, were letting “the spirit move them” in the way of singing or prayer or testimonial or scripture reading. There was at the service a sense of holy calm and reverent sincerity which was most impressive.

Now, social, economic and other causes have brought this church to the point where it must close. With Mr. Williams and in his words: “We cannot help but be grateful for the courage, faith and devotion of these Welsh immigrants, who, in a new country, at once built an edifice of religion and maintained and supported it with their services and their money for nearly ninety years.”

“The prayers, the preaching and the music of the church have been a helpful influence in the life of the people of Fair Haven. . . . We must emulate the devotion of those religious pioneers. *It is not enough* to be lost in the crowd and to think our individual contribution of time and money is of no importance. These people gave the church *the important place in their lives*. It is an example we may well deeply consider as to our own attitude.”

*With stone and mortar, brick and wood  
Here upon this sod  
He raised his temple beautiful  
Wherein to speak with God.*

## NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

### THE CARE OF TRADECARDS AND COMMERCIAL EPHEMERA

IT HAS taken Americans a long time to realize the value of their business documents. Only lately have business corporations appointed librarians to collect and preserve what was formerly deemed trash. If you check through the list of company museums, you will note that most of these collections were only started during the past ten years, and that little thought was heretofore given to this extensive subject. Now everyone is getting on the band wagon to rescue all these historic data. Unfortunately, it's a belated effort.

After thirty years of intensive study of the subject and after having committed almost every possible mistake, I feel that my experience in collecting ephemera should be of some value to others. Perhaps warnings are useless as each individual has a pet theory, but herewith I submit my ideas on the subject.

European collectors, and they certainly are thorough, have mostly always resorted to scrap books. Even lately I have added two more French volumes to my collection at the Metropolitan Museum, and although the tradecards contained were all of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, they were in perfect condition. This method is the easiest way, but when we approach the subject of Americana, many ticklish difficulties crop up to harass the poor curator. A vital point to be recognized is that about fifty percent of American cards have valuable information printed on the reverse side. Often irrelevant lithographs on the face of the cards assume secondary interest. Now this essential feature must be taken into consideration in determining the method of both presentation as well as of preservation. Were we convinced that no detrimental chemical process would destroy, and if we could recklessly afford the cost of such a procedure, a wonderful solution of the problem would be to place each separate addition in individual transparent envelopes. These could in turn be arranged either alphabetically or chronologically in hinged boxes or in scrap books. This again necessitates subdivisions galore separating them as to types, trades, professions with endless cataloguing and cross references of printers, subjects and many other intricacies not dreamed of by the unwary layman.

But alas and alack, such methods require both time and money and there are but few libraries that have a surfeit of either of these commodities.



In full recognition of all the errors I may have committed I still claim that the only practical way for an extensive collection to be enjoyed by visitors, and at the same time to be fairly well protected, is for tradecards, billheads, etc., etc., ad infinitum, to be pasted down along four edges in comfortably sized scrap books. This, of course, excludes all those that have useful documentation on the reverse side. For these, I advocate hinging and, in advising this, recognize that you can run into endless trouble. Prints placed on the right side of the page simply must be hinged on the left edge, and vice versa, if you wish to obviate confusion, and visitors and curators must never handle the books carelessly. I have seen experienced adults turn the leaves back and forth as if an album were a telephone book. This is simply criminal. Scrap book leaves must be turned forwards and never backwards. A simple form of protection is to hold a cardboard in the left hand while turning pages. This gesture prevents the mutilation of contents and keeps everything under smooth control.

No experienced curator would countenance handling pictures without mats, as these are essential to prevent soil, spoil and rubbing of the delicate surfaces, and I have even gone to what some people may think ridiculous extravagance in thus preserving my fifteen hundred odd sheets of aeronautical music. Now why not treat trade material with equal courtesy? Some of the designs were executed by the best artists of their day. Do not be snobbish in your estimate of ephemera. If a choice document turns up, honor it with a frame and in cases where both sides are of equally important significance, a double glass will be imperative!

Save in a few cases where a watermark is of prime importance, I cannot recommend the inlaying process, unless such pages are handled with delicate care; the paper is not sufficiently protected.

The suggestions in this article naturally exclude dealers or collectors who plan eventually to dispose of their material, as individual items find a readier market and the pasted item may suffer financial depreciation.

My point of view is recorded for institutions that seek to aid and teach the present generation of students for, to me, the public has always been of paramount importance. This may be an idealistic approach, but I feel nevertheless that it is vital and sound and like Jeremy Taylor, let us exclaim, "We are not solicitors of the opinion and censures of men, but only that we do our duty."

BELLA C. LANDAUER

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